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A CANDID  
EXAMINATION

OF THAT

Celebrated Piece of SOPHISTRY,

ENTITLED,

HEAVEN *open to all* MEN.

*7*  
IN

A LETTER to a GENTLEMAN in TOWN.

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*Search the* SCRIPTURES.

*Beloved, believe not every Spirit, but try the Spirits whether they are of GOD: because many false Prophets are gone out into the World. 1 JOHN, IV. 1.*

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L O N D O N,

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A GARDID

# EXAMINATION

OF THAT

Coloured Piece of 801 HISTORY

ENTITLED

HEAVEN AND ME

IN

A LETTER TO A CHURCHMAN



LONDON

Printed by J. G. & Co. at the  
British Museum Press, 1851.





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## EXAMINATION, &c.

SIR,



**T**HAT virtue in general is amiable, is allowed on all hands; and that some particular kinds of it are in a more especial manner lovely, is no less indisputable. A benevolence for instance, which is founded upon reason, and the other virtues (by whatever names they are called) which prompt us to do good to mankind, are at once the honour and ornament of human nature. There is not in all the sacred records a more charming character, nor one which warms the human heart more (our BLESSED SAVIOUR'S excepted) than that which *Job* gives us of himself, chapters 29th and 31st. And yet the most striking parts of it are only a recital of his acts of charity and beneficence. *When the ear heard me (says the good man) then it blessed me, and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me: because I de-*

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*livered*

livered the poor that cried, the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me, and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. — And so forth. — The words are not more pleasing, nor appear more beautiful to a man of taste, than the actions express'd by them are attractive of his love. — It is impossible to read them without emotion, and without reverencing and admiring the man who possessed so illustrious virtues. — Nor indeed is it any wonder that we are thus affected by them, since nothing in reality is more Divine and God-like : For goodness and mercy are the most amiable attributes, the most glorious perfections even of GOD himself, and mortals cannot make nearer approaches to Divinity than by the imitation of those excellencies. On the other hand, no deformity is half so monstrous as an un pitying, unrelenting heart. The man who turns a deaf ear to the cries of the needy, who, regarding only himself, is unconcerned at the infirmities, the wants, the miseries of mankind, and shuts up *his bowels of compassion* from creatures of his own species, is not only destitute of the love of GOD, but (excepting his shape) differs in nothing from the wild boar in the desert. Differs in nothing, did I say? — Yes he does; he differs in this, that he is barbarous tho' endued with reason, the boar savage without it, and therefore less a brute. — It is not perhaps easy to imagine a worse character than this is; and yet there have been, and I fear there still are, men more wicked than even this comes to. —  
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These are they who (in the prophet's phrase) *hunt for souls*, who are not contented with making havoc of the bodies of their fellow-creatures, but labour by their writings or conversation, to corrupt and seduce their minds too ; who, after they have scatter'd mischief and ruin around them in this world, are still restless and unquiet, till they have extended their malignity into the other. — This species of enmity to mankind is of all others the most criminal. Indeed, it is as much more criminal than that just now mentioned, as the soul is ~~much~~ more valuable than the body ; or eternity, ~~more~~ lasting than time. Whether the author of *Heaven open to all Men* is of this class, does not become me to say. If we may believe his protestations, certainly he is not ; and whether those are true or not, it is your province, Sir, not mine, to judge. For my part I shall believe him sincere till I have convicted him of falsehood, and treat him with all the decency and good manners that one is entituled to who professes to have the good of mankind in his view. — In his dedication, p. 9th, he tells us, that “ This treatise, “ in dissipating those vain terrors (of a future misery, to wit) which are only proper to nourish “ a servile fear, and to lead men to despair, has “ no other aim than to re-enliven our hopes, and “ to induce us, by knowing the certainty of our “ salvation, to multiply inward peace, and that “ grace which JESUS CHRIST our Redeemer “ has brought down to us from Heaven.” — And what pity is it so generous a scheme should prove

abortive, so noble a project fail in the execution ? For who is the man, as the author observes, p. 10 of his dedication, “ so rancour’d with envy or “ jealousy, who wou’d be displeas’d, or rather “ not rejoiced, that all men of whatever degree, “ country, or condition should be saved ?” For my part, I wish the salvation of all the world from the bottom of my soul. I could wish, if it were possible, that justice should give place to mercy, and that every one might hear the delightful sounds pronounced in his behalf, *come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom.*— But how ardent soever our wishes and desires may be, every consideration, and every thing must give way to truth — *Amicus Socrates, amicus Plato, sed magis amica veritas.* — Truth is the great end we ought to aim at in all our enquiries, and especially in our religious researches, because in them it is of the greatest importance. And our author having in my apprehension deviated widely from that sacred mark, for that reason I have here endeavoured to point out his errors. If I have said any thing on the subject that gives you satisfaction, Sir, I shall think myself extremely lucky; or if you think this letter worthy to appear in public, it will yield me infinite pleasure if it enlightens the mind and corrects the judgment, either of the author or his translator, or if it preserves any of my fellow-christians from the infection of so dangerous a treatise.

The author insinuates in several places of his pamphlet, particularly p. 44. that his design is to  
encou-



encourage virtue and promote christianity; and as he has most solemnly appealed to the Great Searcher of hearts for the purity of his intentions, charity you'll say, Sir, obliges us to believe him. Be it so. — Let it be supposed that the interests of religion, and the happiness of the human race, are the great ends he has in view; still I must have leave to observe, that he has greatly mistaken the means of promoting those ends. This I believe will appear in the following sheets; and therefore I shall only remark in this place, that our author could not have chosen a more improper time to propagate his tenets than at present, because there perhaps never was a time when they were more likely to do hurt. It won't I hope be esteem'd a libel upon the age, if I affirm, that virtue was never less in repute than now, nor religion ever more in danger of being laughed out of countenance. At least I am sure, Sir, you will join issue with me on this subject, because I have heard you acknowledge so much in company. 'Tis too visible that a spirit of infidelity, under various disguises, has gone abroad into the world, attacking the foundations of *Christianity* with a rude effrontery, and in all appearance with too great success: for I have reason to believe, that a third part, if not more, of all in this great metropolis, above the common level, are infected either with deism, arianism, or the impieties of *Socinus*; and as for the mob, they are so sunk in sensuality, and so totally lost in vice and ignorance, that they are as void of understanding, have as imperfect notions

tions of the great ends of their being, and have as little concern about an eternal Hereafter, as the beasts that perish. And when such is the unhappy case of both sorts of people, what can be expected but a suitable practice?

Accordingly, we see that vice and immorality walk abroad without disguise; and that those crimes, which an honest heathen would have blushed at, are now perpetrated by *Christians* in the face of the sun. — But this subject has been so often handled by abler pens, that I forbear to insist upon it. Permit me however to observe, Sir, that a general want of thought and consideration seems to be the great misfortune of the present age, and the unhappy cause of most of our mistakes. — Few people consider the great end of their creation; that they were born for another, and infinitely better, world; and were sent into this only to prepare for eternity: But most seem to act as if their business was to hunt butterflies, or skip and caper like calves in a hot summer's day. Trifles have engrossed their affections, and idle amusements consume the greatest part of their precious time; — that time which was given them to purchase pleasures great as the God from whom they flow, and lasting as the ages of a never-ending duration. How unworthy such a behaviour is, how much below the dignity of human nature, and how extremely foolish and ridiculous, seems too obvious to need pointing out. Should a person have one hour (and but one hour) allowed him to make himself easy and happy for his

life, and yet should employ that hour at push-pin, and neglect the glorious opportunity, what would you think of his behaviour? — And yet, Sir, such a person's conduct is at the worst but folly; but that of a *Christian* who ought to have his conversation in *Heaven*, and yet chuses to be immersed in earth, — who grasps at temporal things and neglects eternal, is down right madness. — But to return from this digression. — Seeing men are so sunk in luxury, so drowned in sensuality, as to be quite insensible to the pleasures of religion, and plainly to prefer the gratification of every corrupt passion to the delights of virtue, and even the hopes of Heaven, judge, I pray you, if this was a proper time for the publication of a pamphlet, wherein we are told, that, however we live here, we shall certainly be happy hereafter; That the most abandoned profligates shall as certainly be saved as the most zealous *Christians*; and have all the happiness that they are capable of; even a greater degree of happiness than if *Adam* had not sinned (p. 11.) And judge at the same time, Sir, whether, if our author be that friend to virtue and *Christianity* that he pretends to be, he is not withal the most injudicious writer that ever attempted to defend a good cause; since the whole tenor of his book is manifestly calculated to prevent that righteousness which exalteth a nation, and to introduce sin and wickedness, which is both the sad reproach and sure ruin of any people; and consequently is calculated to hinder the increase of that peace and grace which he tells

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us (ded. p. 9.) it is the great aim of his treatise to increase and multiply. — But it is now time to come closer to our subject; and first, I shall endeavour to prove that our author's doctrine is utterly irreconcilable with the *Christian* religion: and since he has in many places acknowledged the truth of *Christianity*, if I can demonstrate that his doctrine is inconsistent with it, I then clearly prove his doctrine to be false. Then 2dly, I shall consider the treatise article by article, and I hope to give such answers to every one, as will satisfy you, Sir, and every unbiassed reader. — Now throughout the whole treatise our author endeavours to prove, that men may be saved without personal repentance and amendment; because our BLESSED SAVIOUR's virtues and sufferings will be so imputed to every one, as that they may be justly and properly esteemed his own. And that this doctrine is utterly irreconcilable to *Christianity*, will I think require no great pains to prove. The doctrine of a mediator is the very basis and foundation of the *Christian* system. CHRIST's *dying for our sins, and rising again for our justification*, is the grand pillar of our faith, and that on which all our hopes are founded. And this our author is so far from denying, that he carries it to a degree of excess, as will appear immediately. What that excess is however, it is not my business at present to consider; but what I would observe from it is this, — That since God was pleased to *send his Son into the world, to redeem the world*, that scheme of redemption, if not absolutely necessary,

cessary,



cessary, was at least highly expedient ; yea, the very best scheme that could be. Less than this I think cannot be supposed without impiety. — JESUS CHRIST is certainly a Son in whom his Father delighteth : GOD declared often by a voice from Heaven that he was *his beloved Son in whom he was well pleased* ; and therefore we may undoubtedly conclude, that GOD had never exposed him to a life of scorn and ignominy, and at last have suffered him to be nailed to the cross by the work of his own hands, unless that scheme was in some sense necessary. Neither can I believe that CHRIST would have cloathed himself in our nature, and left the glory of his Father, if any expedient as proper for our redemption could have been found out. — It being granted then, that not only a *propitiation* was necessary, but such a *propitiation as that of the Son of GOD expedient, and most proper* ; let us next consider, what made this *propitiation* necessary. — Now I think the best answer that can be given to this question, Why did the Son of GOD suffer for us ? is in the royal prophet's words, — *That mercy and truth might meet together, and righteousness and peace kiss each other*. That is, GOD sent his own Son to die for men, that he might thereby demonstrate his hatred against sin, and his unbounded love towards the sinner : that he might testify to the world how jealous he is of his honour : that nothing is so dear to him which he will not part with for the vindication of his justice and holiness, and for the defence of the authority

of his laws: in short, that he might manifest to angels and men, that he hates sin as much as he loves his own Son. (1) This I think is the only rational account that ever has been, or can be, given of this matter: and from hence I think it follows, that GOD never can be reconciled to an impenitent offender, and that *without holiness* (personal I mean, not imputed holiness) *no man shall see the Lord*. For it is absurd to imagine that GOD, who gave up his own Son to shame and spitting, in order to vindicate the honour of his laws, and do right to his immutable attributes of justice and holiness, will ever receive finners to his favour in a way that overthrows these attributes, which pardoning them without repentance effectually does. — “ If GOD can pardon finners “ without repentance, and treat them as righteous “ while they continue wicked, this might have been “ done as well without as with a sacrifice for our “ sins; and so CHRIST’s humiliation and death “ might have been spared. The honour of GOD’s “ laws, and his justice and holiness, might have stood “ as safe without as with a propitiation.” (2) But if GOD foresaw that without an *atonement* those his *attributes could not have been vindicated*, and if he thought it more necessary that his own beloved Son should bleed upon the cross than that his holiness and justice should not be vindicated, then we may be assured that the case will not be altered now that the atonement has been made. We may be assured that GOD will not save any man

(1) Dr. Tillotson.

(2) Bp. Williams.

man now that there has been a propitiation, in a way which would contradict or destroy those attributes which he has been at so much pains to manifest and defend. Indeed it would have been as reasonable to have expected pardon at first without any propitiation as forgiveness after it, when, by granting such forgiveness, God must part with his justice and holiness, to maintain and vindicate which he delivered up to Death the Son of his love: — so that the gospel terms of faith, repentance, and obedience, are established upon the same reason, and therefore must be as necessary as a propitiation. Indeed of the two, faith and obedience are perhaps the most necessary: for some (considering the infinite mercy of God, and that this divine attribute is all over his works) have doubted whether God might not have forgiven sinners upon their repentance without a propitiation; but no man, till our author, I believe ever imagined, that he could be reconciled to men, who declare they will not be reconciled to him; because such a supposition is in itself absurd, and a contradiction to the nature of things. But if, on the other hand, God could not at first pardon without a propitiation, which is the most general opinion, because such mercy would have been inconsistent with justice, we may likewise conclude, that, for the very same reason, God cannot forgive impenitent offenders now that a propitiation has been made. — Our BLESSED SAVIOUR's sufferings were doubtless perfect, and indeed of such infinite merit as to answer every end that God the Father,

or GOD the Son, design'd they should answer : for *by one offering he hath ever perfected them that are sanctified.* Heb. x. 14. And by that offering GOD *has reconciled the world to himself.* 2. Cor. v. 19. But we are not to imagine from hence that our business is already done. That would be a very false inference, and directly contrary to the apostle's conclusion : — for his is, — *be ye reconciled to GOD,* ver. 21. *GOD must not only be reconciled to us, but we must also be reconciled to GOD.* Now GOD has declared, in the most ample manner, his desire of being reconciled to us ; for he *was in CHRIST reconciling the world to himself,* saith St. Paul: but “ as there were two parties concerned in  
 “ that covenant, the one forgiving, the other to be  
 “ forgiven; so there must be supposed a capacity on  
 “ our part to be reconciled, and a desire to do every  
 “ thing that may promote that reconciliation.” (1)  
 This is the reason why the apostle adds—*be ye reconciled to GOD* : which shews, that there is this limitation upon the words, GOD was in CHRIST reconciling the world to himself, *viz.* that GOD will only be reconciled to us upon condition that we are reconciled to him ; that is, upon condition that we do every thing he requires, in order to our reconciliation. From whence it is evident, that as our BLESSED SAVIOUR's sufferings did make way for our reconciliation, and made our forgiveness possible, without any derogation from the honour, justice or holiness of GOD ; so it is only upon condition of our being qualified for a reconciliation, that we shall become partakers of his favour, and  
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have him really and effectually reconciled to us. And therefore, tho' the sufferings of CHRIST, considered in themselves, are of infinite value and merit; yet they never can obtain pardon for an obstinate rebel against God; because they cannot obtain it without weakening the authority of the divine laws, and derogating from the divine perfections: that is, in short, they can never obtain it while God continues just and holy, for justice and holiness will be ever irreconcilable with impenitence.—The sum of all is this, CHRIST is indeed the propitiation for our sins: but as a propitiation does, in the nature of it, declare God's love to justice and his hatred against sin; so it implies that the favour and mercy thereby procured, and promised to us, can in no other way be obtained than that which is consistent with, and promotes, the same ends. I have already proved, that the ends for which God gave his Son a propitiation were, that he might maintain the honour of his laws, and demonstrate his holiness and justice; and therefore from what I have just now said it follows, that favour and mercy can only be obtained in some way, that will likewise maintain the honour of the divine law, and demonstrate God's holiness and justice.—But should God confer mercy upon impenitent offenders, should he be reconciled to men who are irreconcilable with him, this would as effectually overthrow his attributes and destroy the authority of his laws, as if he had pardon'd them at first without a propitiation. Since then the Holy Scripture has declared, that

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God did not at first pardon sinners without a propitiation; because such a pardon would have been repugnant to his justice; it has by parity of reason likewise declared, that God will not pardon sinners, now a propitiation has been made, without personal repentance and obedience; because both these stand upon the same footing. And since our author has affirmed that God, not only may, but actually will, pardon sinners without personal repentance and amendment, he has by that assertion contradicted the Holy Scripture and the *Christian* religion, and therefore I hope does not expect to be believed. This was the first thing I undertook to prove, and I hope I have done it, Sir, to your satisfaction.— Here then I might be allowed to stop: for having demonstrated that the whole scope of our author's treatise is contradictory to the word of God and the *Christian* religion, both which he professes highly to reverence, I have thereby proved (even himself being judge) the falsity of it. — But in as much as you seemed to think a particular and minute answer necessary, and because many who have read the treatise may want conviction in every article, which, thanks to God, you want in none, therefore I shall now proceed to consider the performance more particularly. — I would not be understood, however, as if I meant to consider every trivial circumstance, or animadvert upon every particular period: such an undertaking would be extremely troublesome to me, and extremely tiresome to the reader; and indeed is quite unnecessary. But I shall so answer it as to omit nothing

thing that is material; and shall represent our author's arguments in the truest and strongest light.

1st. The first article contains little to the purpose; for in that he only endeavours to expose the uncharitable opinion of some particular *Christians*, concerning the number of the saved; and with them he may use his freedom: only I think he acts unfairly, in charging their opinion upon the whole body. He says, p. 4th, "That *Christians* believe three things necessary to salvation. *First*, That one must be instructed in, and believe, the chief articles of religion. *Secondly*, To be saved one must keep the commandments. And, *Thirdly*, Love God above all things, and his neighbour as himself." — Now by believing the chief articles of religion, and keeping the commandments, our author certainly means the articles and commandments of the *Christian* religion, otherwise he reasons improperly. And indeed that this is his meaning, is plain from the words that follow. "From these three principles, a *Christian* concludes the damnation of almost all mankind:" for he cannot suppose a *Christian* concludes from thence the damnation of almost all mankind, but because he thinks the *Christian* believes that all mankind are obliged to believe and obey the *Christian* religion; and likewise knows, that they do not so believe and obey. — But, Sir, if it is not true, that *Christians* think the belief and practice of CHRIST's religion necessary for the salvation of all mankind; or even for the greater part of them: on the contrary, if they

they think these things necessary only to them to whom the gospel has been offered, then our author's supposition is without foundation, and the structure built upon it necessarily falls to the ground; because the greatest part of mankind, having never heard of CHRIST's religion, are neither obliged to believe its doctrines, nor obey its laws. And that this is the opinion of all judicious *Christians*, I may venture to assert without any danger of a mistake. — Indeed, to suppose that GOD should require the belief and practice of *Christianity* from those to whom it never has been promulged, is to represent the best of Beings in the blackest colours: it is to represent him worse than *Pharaoh*, that required brick without straw, because the consequences in the one case are more dreadful than in the other. — The apostle asks a very pertinent question, *Rom. x. 14*. How shall they (the gentiles) believe in him, (*viz.* CHRIST) of whom they have not heard? — The plain meaning of which is, that it is impossible to believe in CHRIST before the knowledge of him has been revealed: and can we think that a GOD, of infinite mercy and goodness, will condemn his helpless creatures for not believing what it is impossible they should believe? GOD forbid. The thought is blasphemous, and repugnant not only to mercy, but to justice. A GOD without goodness, says *Dr. Scot*, is a GOD without a Deity; and sure, were he capable of such injustice, he were void of goodness in reality. It is evident therefore, that the belief and practice of *Christianity*



*anity* are only obligatory upon those to whom the terms of the gospel have been offered, and by consequence either are, or might have been, *Christians*. And this is strongly confirmed by another passage from the same apostle, *Rom. ii. 12. They that have sinned without law (i.e. the Pagans) shall also perish without law.*—For the sense I think is clearly this; they that have sinned against the law of nature (or rather against the original revelation) shall be punished according to the law of nature, which shews that the law of nature or original revelation, made to *Adam* and *Noah*, not the *Jewish* or *Christian* law, is the rule of their obedience. And such of them, as do walk according to that rule, shall as certainly be saved as the most zealous *Christian*. For in every nation *he that feareth GOD and worketh righteousness is accepted with him*, *Acts x. 35.*—To fear GOD and work righteousness are general expressions for being religious, and tho' the Apostle applies them to such as were to be instructed in CHRIST's religion, yet they justly belong to every man who walks according to the truth of that dispensation under which he lives. This reasoning, Sir, seems to me conclusive, and I dare say you will readily acquiesce in it, and that all judicious *Christians* will do the same. We have no need therefore to recur to St. *Paul's* expression—*O the depth of the riches of the wisdom of GOD*, which our author says, is the common refuge of *Christians*, because I defy him to prove that judicious *Christians* have ever determined the number of the Saved, or that

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they ever asserted that 29 out of every 30 shall be damned, as he alledges. And till that be proved, we have good reason to refuse the charge, and to esteem it a calumny without foundation. As to that passage of our BLESSED SAVIOUR, *strive to enter in at the strait gate, &c.* were it certainly to be extended to every age of *Christianity*, it would no doubt clearly prove, that the greater part of *Christians* must be damned, but I would fain hope, nay think, it may fairly be restrain'd to the particular time at which he spoke, for it is addressed immediately to his then disciples: and as the contrary cannot be demonstrated, we may have leave to adhere to the most charitable side of the question.—After all, should we grant, that the greatest part of *Christians* shall be damned (which Heaven avert) yet this would by no means prove that 29 out of every 30, *Pagans* and *Mahometans* included, shall be damned likewise: because by our author's own supposition, the *Christian* world contains but 5 parts out of 30; and therefore it can never follow, that, because 3 of the 5 *Christian* parts shall be miserable, therefore 29 out of all, *Pagans* &c. included, shall be miserable likewise. But I have dwelt too long on this article, let us now proceed to the second. — The former part of the argument to this article is this, --- “ All men shall be saved, except *Anti-christ* ;” to prove which is the intention of this 2d chapter. --- Mean time he honestly confesses, “ That his proposition has not been confirmed by any one; that it must be supported  
“ with

“ with proofs more ancient than tradition, all  
 “ antiquity having rested on those words of St.  
 “ *Paul, Of the depth of the riches of the wisdom and*  
 “ *knowledge of God :*” that is, in plain *English*,  
 all antiquity (*Origen* not excepted) is against  
 him. Now, Sir, whatever effect this confession  
 may have on others, I own the lateness of the  
 discovery is to me not only a presumptive proof,  
 but a convincing argument, against the truth of  
 our author’s doctrine. For had it really been the  
 doctrine of our BLESSED SAVIOUR and his Apo-  
 stles, as he alledges (tho’ no man before him has  
 ever found it in their writings) it must certainly  
 have been known to their immediate successors,  
 who were instructed by them. St. *Jude* tells us,  
 that the faith was delivered to the saints; the  
 meaning of which is, that the first *Christians* were  
 taught every doctrine which was necessary to be  
 believed in order to salvation. This I presume  
 no body doubts of; and as little can it be doubted  
 but that St. *Paul’s* command to *Timothy*, 2 Ep.  
 ii. 2. *What thou hast heard of me among many*  
*witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men*  
*who shall be able to teach others also*, was for some  
 time punctually obeyed : at least it must be grant-  
 ed, that the apostles were careful to instruct their  
 disciples (especially such of them as were to suc-  
 ceed them in the weighty charge of governing the  
 Church of God) in all the momentous points of  
*Christianity*. It cannot be supposed, for instance,  
 that, when St. *John* constituted *Ignatius* bishop of  
*Antioch*, which all antiquity agrees he did (and

indeed if we deny it, we must give up all faith in history) he did not instruct him in every article of the *Christian* faith, and in every other thing which was fit for him to believe and do. Less than this could not qualify St. *Ignatius* for the government of any Church; much less could he be fit, without such instruction, to be at the head of one of the greatest and most illustrious Churches in the *Eastern* empire. If then our author's doctrine was known to the apostles, as he would fain persuade us to believe it was, surely St. *John* did not conceal it from his beloved disciple, when he was preparing him for the episcopal office, because the duties of that office could not be rightly discharged without the knowledge of it. If all men are to be saved except *Antichrist*, it is "a doctrine so full of consolation for all men, and a source of such infinite joy to all mankind" (as the author expresses it) that as an inspired Apostle could not possibly be ignorant of it himself, so it is absurd to imagine that he would not communicate it to his disciples.—He well knew, that it is the part of a good bishop to comfort the feeble-minded, and cheer the desponding sinner, and what motive half so proper as to give him assurance of eternal happiness? This shews the necessity of this doctrine for St. *Ignatius*, had it really been true; and proves demonstrably, that St. *John* must have taught it him, had it been, as our author supposes, so material a part of *Christianity*. Let us now see whether any such doctrine is to be found in St. *Ignatius's* writings.

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If he really believed and taught it, we may presume some hints at least must be dropt about it in his works. But this is so far from being the case, that he flatly contradicts it, and bears full testimony to the contrary. The only quotation that I shall trouble you with, Sir, on this head, you will find in his epistle to the *Ephesians*, parag. 16th. *Μὴ πλανᾶθε—ἀδελφοί μὲν οἱ ὑποκρίθοντες. Βασιλείαν Θεοῦ ἢ κληρονομήσουσιν*—and a little after—*ὁ τοιοῦτος ῥυπαρὸς φερόμενος, εἰς τὸ πῦρ τοῦ ἄσβεστον χωρήσει, ὁμοίως καὶ ἁπλῶν αὐτῶν*. In *English* thus—“Be not deceived, my brethren, corrupters of houses or families shall not inherit the kingdom of God.—Such a one becoming or being unclean shall go into the fire that *never shall be quenched*.” It were easy to adduce many other testimonies both from this pious martyr and the other great lights of the church in their several ages: but this one being full plain, and in direct opposition to our author’s doctrine, is sufficient; especially as he acknowledges that all antiquity is on our side. Indeed, I see not what can possibly be objected against it, except it be alleged, that this epistle is not *Ignatius’s*. But this has been so clearly and so learnedly demonstrated by that great ornament of the church of *England*, bishop *Pearson*, in his *Vindiciæ Ignatianæ*, that I believe no sensible man now will venture to dispute it.—Indeed, if, after all that eminent prelate has said (against the most learned and subtlest adversary (1) the fathers ever had) it be still uncertain, whether the epistle to the *Ephesians*, and the other

(1) *Daillé*.

other fix which bear St. *Ignatius's* name, be truly his, I may venture to assert, that there is more uncertainty concerning antient authors than most people are aware of. For, if, after a book has been tried by the rules and marks of sound criticism, and found according to those rules and marks to belong to such an author, it may still be disputed whether it be that author's, I see not where we can stop: I see not, why we may not dispute whether *Virgil* wrote the *Æneid*; or *Sallust*, *Cataline's* conspiracy. And what wild havock such scepticism would make in the learned world, and among the authors of antiquity, a man of less judgment than you, Sir, will easily discover—But it is now time to return to our author. He prefaces his first argument with this assertion, “That all men, without excepting any other than **JESUS CHRIST**, have sinned in *Adam*.” *p. 7.* And if we ask, how far the personal sin of *Adam* may affect his hapless progeny, he tells us, that it might estrange them from eternal life, *p. 7.* and even damn them, *p. 12. 32.* The first part of our author's doctrine is undoubtedly true; because eternal life was not due to the nature of man, but was the free gift of **GOD**; and therefore might have been promised upon what condition our Creator pleased, and of consequence might be forfeited upon the non-performance of that condition. Now the condition upon which **GOD** promised immortal life to man was, that *Adam* should abstain from the tree of knowledge of good and evil; and since he did not perform his part of  
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the covenant, (1) did not perform the stipulated condition upon which alone immortality had been promised, it plainly follows, that he might be justly deprived of it. And after *Adam* the first man thus become obnoxious to mortality, I presume the most sanguine will scarce contend, that his posterity could become immortal without a miracle. For nothing is more certain, than that a mortal father never can beget an immortal son : and that a miracle should be wrought, neither justice nor mercy made it necessary.

As for the other part of our author's doctrine, viz. that the sin of *Adam* might condemn his descendents to *eternal misery*, that does not seem so plain. On the contrary, no doctrine seems more repugnant to reason, and the goodness and mercy of God, not even predestination and reprobation itself excepted. Indeed the most of the arguments which confute the one, are equally strong against the other.—If there be a God, he is just, he is merciful, he is good ; but with neither of these attributes is it possible to reconcile a doctrine which damns a whole world of creatures for a crime in which they had not, nor could possibly have, the least share. It is one thing to deprive them of eternal life (which they had by nature

(1) That there was a covenant between God and our first parents is to me plain, from these words, *In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.* For they suppose a promise, in case of obedience ; and where a promise is made on one hand, and punishments threatened on the other, there necessarily a covenant must be supposed to intervene. Whoever would wish to have just notions of the condition of our first parents in *Paradise*, may consult bishop's *Bull's State of Man before the Fall.*

nature no right to) for the sin of *Adam*; and quite another to send them to eternal torments for his sake. The first is easily reconcileable to the strictest notion of justice, and even mercy, as I have already shewn; because, after *Adam* himself became mortal, his posterity (without a miracle) must be so also. Or if we consider him as our head and representative in the first covenant, in that capacity likewise he might forfeit immortality for us, because God might have promised it to his posterity only upon condition of his obedience, which doubtless was the case.

There is no doubt neither, but God may justly inflict temporal punishments upon the children for the father's sake. This is not repugnant to either of the divine attributes, because there is a world after this, wherein he may amply recompence them for their sufferings here, and so vindicate the inequalities of his providence beyond exception. But eternal misery can only be the portion of the criminals themselves, because there is no after-state to make one amends for such sufferings. The very notion of justice implies in it—the giving to every one their due. But it is impossible that eternal torments should be due to creatures before they had a being; or, which is much the same, before they existed in a state wherein they could offend. Now this was the case of all the posterity of *Adam*, at the time of his first transgression: for if they then had a being, it was only in his loins, where they could not possibly have any accession to his fall; and consequently, it follows



lows, from the nature of justice, that they cannot on that account be punished with everlasting misery. Agreeable to this, we find that GOD declares, by his prophet *Ezek. ch. xviii. 20. The soul that sinneth shall die; the son shall not bear the iniquity of his father, nor the father of the son.* If it be asked how this is consistent with other places of Holy Scripture, wherein it is said, that, *by the disobedience of one, the many, i. e. all mankind, were made sinners—That we are by nature children of wrath—That we are conceived in sin, and brought forth in iniquity,* and the like; I answer, that we are said to be made sinners by the disobedience of *Adam*, because we were treated as sinners upon this account, that is, we became liable to death, and lost our title to the kingdom of Heaven, by his breach of the first covenant. How this is reconcilable with justice has been already made appear, and therefore I say no more of it. Only permit me to observe, that our BLESSED SAVIOUR, who *knew no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth*, is in the same manner, and for the same reason, said to be made sin for us—*made sin*, that is, he was punished with death for us; he was treated as though he himself had been the sinner, *his soul was made an offering for sin*, though in itself pure and spotless. This is evidently the meaning of that passage—and as to that other—*we are by nature children of wrath.* (1) A very learned author has, with great shew of probability, endeavoured to prove, that it does

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not

(1) Mr. Taylor of Norwich.

not relate at all to original sin, but to those acquired habits of vice which become a second nature. However, I shall not contend with any body on that account ; I shall readily allow, that it supposes us out of a state of favour with God, and that, in our natural condition, we cannot enter into the kingdom of Heaven. Thus far no doubt it shews that we are children of wrath ; but it by no means proves, that we are liable to eternal misery for *Adam's* sin ; for it is one thing to be banished the presence of our prince, and another to be loaded with chains, and confined to a lonely dungeon. We certainly derive a stain from our first parents, which renders us unfit for, and indeed incapable of, Heaven, while we continue in it ; because no unclean, no impure thing can enter there ; but it does not necessarily follow, that that corruption (which is more properly our misfortune than our fault) must be punished with everlasting burnings. God forbid. The death of body and soul, *i. e.* annihilation, seems punishment sufficient, and indeed no more can be fairly inferred from the divine threatening—*In the day thou eatest, &c.*

As to that other passage in the *Psalms*, *I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.* The author just now mentioned, says, that it ought to be rendered otherwise : in this manner for instance, *I was born in iniquity*, and in sin did my mother nurse or warm me ; and adds, that it is a hyperbolical form of speech, whereby the *Psalmist* loads himself with guilt,  
and

and acknowledges his vileness. In short, he says, it is similar to those other passages, *Pf. 58. 3. The wicked are estranged from the womb. As soon as they are born, they go about and speak lies.* And, *If. 48. 8. And wast called a transgressor from the womb.* His chief argument is, that the word **וְנִלְמָד** is never applied in Holy Scripture to human birth or conception, but *ad brutorum animalium coitum* only, as in the case of *Laban's* sheep on sight of *Jacob's* rods, &c. But however that be, certain it is, that it can signify no more than this, that we are brought into the world in a state of impurity and uncleanness, whereby we are unfit for Heaven; and this I have already acknowledged to be true. But it cannot be understood to mean, that the person conceiving, or the child conceived, or born, contracts any moral guilt, by the bare acts of conception or birth; since it is certain, the acts of conceiving and bringing forth children is absolutely necessary (in lawful marriage) for the propagation of the human species; and I think it is on all hands agreed, that the child conceived, or born, is entirely innocent, even when the parents have sinned by the act of generation.

Having thus paved the way for entering upon the main subject, I come now to consider our author's first argument. You will find it, Sir, *p. 8.* in these words: " JESUS CHRIST came to save  
 " that which was lost, but all men were lost by  
 " the sin of *Adam*; therefore JESUS CHRIST  
 " came to save all men. The first proposition is,

“ that of JESUS CHRIST himself; the Son of  
 “ man came to save that which was lost. The  
 “ second is that of St. *Paul*—*we were by nature*  
 “ *children of wrath.*” *Eph. ii. 3.* These two  
 propositions then, saith our author, are incontestable; and, in the sense they were meant by the divine teachers of them, I grant they are: therefore (adds he) the consequence must likewise be certain. And with the same restriction, I grant the conclusion likewise. He then proceeds—  
 “ For it must be observed, that JESUS CHRIST  
 “ does not say he came to offer men the means to  
 “ save themselves; but, that he came to save  
 “ them. A faithful saying, says St. *Paul*, and  
 “ worthy of all acceptance, that JESUS CHRIST  
 “ came into the world to save sinners: therefore  
 “ he came to save all men.” In the reasoning (if sophistry may be termed reasoning) the great stress is laid upon this; that JESUS CHRIST does not say, he came to offer men the means to save themselves, but that he came to save them: and it is owned, our BLESSED SAVIOUR does not say in this place, that he came to offer men only the means to save themselves: nay, it is certain, that he did much more, for he actually purchased redemption for all who ever have obeyed, or shall obey, the will of GOD; which no performances of their own ever could have done. In short, it is certain, that in Scripture style, he came to *save all men*: but then I deny that ever CHRIST has promised to *save men without themselves*, that is, without their own endeavours; and I challenge our author,

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or his defenders, to shew that he has not required the belief and practice of his religion as terms of salvation absolutely necessary, from all to whom the gospel has been offered ; and when they have done this, I hereby promise to become their convert—mean time let them try what to make of these texts.—He that *believeth not shall be damned*; St. Mark xvi. 16. *God gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish,—he that believeth in the Son hath everlasting life : and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of GOD abideth on him* ; John iii. 16, 36. *Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish*; St. Luke xiii, 3, 5. *Without holiness no man shall see the Lord* ; and *then shall he say to them on the left hand, depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels*; St. Mat. xxv. 41. These passages are plain and need no comment, and from them, and innumerable others which might be quoted, it seems to me certain, faith and obedience are absolutely necessary in order to salvation ;—yet, notwithstanding the light is as clear as noon-day, our author hath unhappily fixed a sense upon the word *save*, which is repugnant to right reason, and directly contrary to the general tenor of Holy Scripture. Let me only ask our author, if the son of a king should take a long journey in order to intercede for rebels, and should so far prevail, as to obtain their lives and fortunes for them, upon the easy condition of saying, GOD save the king ;—whether in this case, the son of that king might not justly, and

and with propriety, be said to have taken his journey, or come, to *save* these rebels, tho' it might happen afterwards, that for non-performance of the condition their lives were taken away? I have no doubt but this question will be answered in the affirmative, and therefore I desire to know, why the word *save* then applied to CHRIST our LORD may not be allowed to have some such meaning: especially since our author's construction is equally absurd and irreligious; as shall be more fully proved hereafter.

The next argument is founded on *Caiaphas's* prophecy of our BLESSED SAVIOUR's death. "The last words, *viz.* [*That he should gather together in one the children of GOD that were scattered abroad*] note clearly, says our author, "that they ought to be understood and taken, *pro singulis hominibus omnium generum*, for every individual of human nature; and for all men scatter'd throughout the whole Earth." Now tho' the words here adduced prove nothing to our author's purpose, being only a prophecy that the *Gentiles* were to be admitted into the Church, and made one body with the believing *Jews*, yet I shall not quarrel with him on that account, because the doctrine of universal redemption is certainly the doctrine of Holy Scripture.—Let us now see what is to be inferred from this confession. Why hence it follows, according to our author, "That CHRIST may be said to have died for every individual of human nature, as if he had died for that individual only." Now,  
if

if by JESUS CHRIST's dying for every individual, as if he had died for that individual only, our author means, that the efficacy of CHRIST's death may extend to every individual who performs the conditions of the gospel covenant, as certainly as if CHRIST had died for that individual only, I readily subscribe to his opinion; for in that sense, it is certain, CHRIST *tasted Death for every man* alike. But if our author means that every individual shall as certainly be saved, as things at present are, as if CHRIST had died for that individual alone, I must beg leave to differ from him. And that this is his meaning, is very apparent from what follows; for he adds—" Now  
 " who will say that if JESUS CHRIST had come  
 " upon Earth, for only one particular person, and  
 " had died for him, that person would not have  
 " been saved? Can it be doubted, that JESUS  
 " CHRIST having taken on himself all the sins of  
 " that person, and having submitted to satisfy  
 " the justice of GOD for him, by all the pains  
 " and sufferings he endured; can it be doubted, I  
 " say, that, that particular person had repented  
 " in JESUS CHRIST, had fasted and suffered in  
 " JESUS CHRIST, and in him had been nail'd to,  
 " and died on, the cross, 2 P. ix." To all which I answer, *First*, That supposing that person to be endued with the ordinary malignity of human nature, and not to have an uncommon and supernatural degree of grace conferred upon him, it implies no impossibility to suppose, that such a person might be damned; because, being a free agent,

agent, he might reject all the offers of grace that, in such circumstances, could be made to him. But then, *Secondly*, I confess, it is not probable that such a person should be damned; nay I believe he would certainly have been saved; because I can't suppose that CHRIST would divest himself of his eternal Glory, take upon him our nature, and in it live a mean, contemptible and poor life, and at last suffer the pain and ignominy of a cross, for a single person, unless he certainly foresaw that that person would embrace his Gospel, and so be entitled to salvation. But still the certainty of the person's salvation does not arise from hence, that it is impossible *any should perish for whom CHRIST died*; but from the particular nature of the person, which must be supposed so docible, as to yield to the motions of divine grace. Indeed, it would be a kind of absurdity to suppose that CHRIST should die for one particular person, at the same time that he knew that person would not be benefited by his passion; because it would suppose that CHRIST should throw away his life to no purpose, or at least to no visible purpose. But this objection cannot be urged against the *Christian* scheme, or system, because tho' many for whom our BLESSED SAVIOUR shed his blood shall perish thro' their own default, yet it is likewise certain, that thousands and millions shall obtain eternal redemption by his death. Tho' therefore it be true, that CHRIST *died for all men*, and that he excludes none from the benefit of his passion, but such as wilfully contemn his laws, and treat his  
pre-



precious blood as an unholy thing; yet it does not follow, as our author would insinuate, that all men shall as certainly be saved as any individual person would have been, supposing our SAVIOUR to have died for him alone, because the cases are widely different, as I have shewn just now: besides, that a person may be damned for whom CHRIST has suffered, appears so plainly from the words of the Apostle, Rom. xiv. 15. *Destroy not him with thy meat for whom CHRIST died*, that farther proof is needless. As to that passage wherein our author asks the question, whether it can be doubted, but that, that “ particular person had “ repented in CHRIST JESUS, had fasted and “ suffered in JESUS CHRIST, and in him had been “ nailed to and died upon the cross;”—it contains the rankest poison of the *Antinomian* heresy, and is equally subversive of *Christianity* and virtue. For what he says of that particular person, he supposes to be true of all mankind, even the most abandon’d miscreants; because, he supposes that CHRIST died for all men, in the same manner, as if he had died for every individual alone, and by himself. Now if it be true, that the fasting and suffering of CHRIST (for I speak not of his repentance, because it is nonsense to talk of repentance where there is no sin) is imputed to every individual, as their own proper act and deed, which is our author’s scheme; it is certain, there can be no need for our personal repentance and humiliation; and consequently we may take our full swing in wickedness, without any remorse,—

without so much as offering up one LORD *have mercy*. And how much this is like to encourage virtue and promote religion, which our author pretends to be so zealous for, I leave you, Sir, to judge. Mean time permit me to observe, that this doctrine quite destroys our author's favourite distinction, betwixt the grace of redemption and the grace of super-abundance: for, since we are assured by the prophet, *Ezek. xviii. 22.* that a sincere repentance blots out the stain of the blackest crimes, and seeing our author supposes that all men have fasted, repented and suffered in JESUS CHRIST, it clearly follows, that all men are equally innocent and pure; nay, by parity of reason, all men may be said to have led a holy and virtuous life, as well as to have repented, and suffered in JESUS CHRIST: and indeed, our author asserts so much in plain terms, *p. 20.* where he says, that GOD imputes to us the good works of JESUS CHRIST; the consequence of which is, that all men are equally virtuous and holy; because the virtue and holiness of CHRIST, which is perfect, and one and the same, is imputed to every one, even the most atrocious criminals, alike, as to the good and faithful. But, if all men are equally holy, they will be equally happy too, because happiness will undoubtedly be dispensed according to the degree of virtue: and thus our author's distinction, as well as the different degrees of happiness founded upon it, comes to nothing.— At the bottom of *p. 9.* he tells us, that, *to be in JESUS CHRIST, and not to walk after the flesh,* is the same  
same

same thing ; and because the Apostle says, *Rom. viii.*  
*1. There is now no condemnation to them which are*  
*in CHRIST JESUS, who walk not after the flesh, but*  
*after the spirit.*—From hence he would have us to  
infer, that no *Christian* shall be damned : for, if this  
is not his meaning in this place, I own I know  
not what is ; and therefore shall be glad to see him  
explain himself. Mean time, taking it for granted,  
that I have hit upon his meaning, give me leave  
to observe, that his explication of the Apostle's  
words is quite erroneous : for it is not true, that,  
*to be in CHRIST JESUS, and not to walk after*  
*the flesh,* is the same thing : *to be in CHRIST*  
*JESUS,* is to be a *Christian*, *i. e.* to be baptized  
and profess the doctrine of *CHRIST*. *Not to*  
*walk after the flesh,* is not to obey the dictates of  
corrupt nature, not to be governed by sinful pas-  
sions ; but to be led by reason and walk after the  
spirit, *i. e.* the spirit of *GOD*.—And if these ex-  
pressions were synonymous, it would from thence  
follow, that no professor of *CHRIST*'s doctrine can  
be governed by his sinful passions, or obey the dic-  
tates of corrupt nature ; which I presume even  
our author will scarcely affirm, and, if he does, I  
am sure no reasonable person will believe him.—  
In *p. 10*, are these words : “ All human nature  
“ had really and in fact been corrupted, and ren-  
“ dered culpable in *Adam* ; therefore, really and  
“ in fact, was sanctified in *JESUS CHRIST*. The sin  
“ of *Adam* had been a real source of death to all  
“ men, without excepting one :—therefore the  
“ redemption of *JESUS CHRIST* became a real

“ source of life (*i. e.* eternal life) to all men.” For the proof of this our author refers us to St. Paul’s 5th chap. to the *Romans*, the explication of which is the subject of the 3d article; and thither therefore we must follow him.—ART. III.—But before we proceed, permit me to observe, that, by the rules of sound criticism, we are obliged to explain the obscure and difficult passages of any author, by such as are more plain and easy; and never to interpret one place so as to clash with or contradict another, when it can admit of a more candid explanation, and the author be made to speak consistently. No man ought to be accused of self-contradiction without the clearest proofs: this is a piece of justice every writer may lay claim to; and I hope our author is no such enemy to inspiration, as to refuse it to the penmen of the Holy Scripture.

Taking this then for granted, if it can be made appear, from many plain, intelligible places of Holy Scripture, and particularly from the writings of the same Apostle, that *the wicked shall be damned*, it will from thence clearly follow, that our author’s sense of St. Paul’s 5th chap. to the *Romans* is not the true sense; because he has produced it to prove, that *all men, even the wicked, shall be saved*, which is a quite contrary doctrine. Now, if we look into St. *Matt.* vii. 21, 22, 23. and join to these the part of the 46th verse of the 25th chap. we shall quickly see my assertion clearly proved. The words are as follow: *Not every one that saith unto me, LORD, LORD, shall enter*



enter into the kingdom of Heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in Heaven. Many will say to me in that day, LORD, LORD, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works; and then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity.—And these (i. e. the wicked) shall go (εἰς αἰῶνον καὶ ὀνείδην) into everlasting punishment. Where by-the-by it is worth remarking, that the word αἰῶνας is the same that is used concerning the happiness of the just in the following part of the verse; and since no-body ever doubted of the eternity of happiness, and the laws of criticism will not permit us to explain the same word in different senses in the same verse, we must therefore infer, that the punishment of the wicked shall be strictly and properly eternal (1).

Let us now hear St. Paul's account of the matter: we may learn it from his Ep. to the Rom. ii. 6, 7, 8, 9.—*who (i. e. God) will render to every man according to his deeds. To them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory, honour, and immortality, (he will render) eternal life: but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, (he will render) indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doth evil.* The intent of these passages are obvious to the meanest understanding; and therefore common sense forbids us to admit a meaning of any other passage which

(1) See Dr. Tillotson's Sermon on the Eternity, &c.

which contradicts them. Though therefore we could give no tolerable account of the difficult chapter which our author quotes; yet, from what I have already said, we might with certainty conclude, that his exposition of it is erroneous, and by consequence that all the inferences founded upon that exposition are false and groundless. But, thanks to God, this is not the case: for a very satisfactory account not only may be, but actually hath been, given of this chapter, and of all St. Paul's epistles by Dr. *Wells*, *Whitby*, and others, to whose labours I beg leave to remit you, Sir, in order to save time, and to prevent this letter from swelling to too great a size. Mean time, that you may not complain of my having quite neglected our author in this place, I shall animadvert a little upon the doctrine which he deduces from this chapter.—And here, having quoted the Apostle's words from the 6th to the 10th verse inclusively, “ *For when we were without strength, in due time CHRIST died for the ungodly: for scarce for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure, for a good man some would even dare to die. But GOD commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, CHRIST died for the ungodly. Much more then being justified now by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him: for if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to GOD by the death of his son, much more being reconciled we shall be saved by his life.*” He then adds, p. 12. “ That the reconciliation purchased by  
“ CHRIST

“ CHRIST is applied in the same manner, that  
 “ the sin of *Adam* was applied. It was not re-  
 “ quired of men to consent personally to sin, to  
 “ feel the effects of it, &c.—And why then  
 “ should it be necessary for them to act for them-  
 “ selves, in order to be justified in JESUS CHRIST?  
 “ Why should not the redemption be applied to  
 “ them without their so much as thinking of it?  
 “ Is it that JESUS CHRIST has not as much power  
 “ to save all men without exception, as *Adam*  
 “ had to damn them all in general?” And so  
 forth.—To expose the absurdity of this way of  
 reasoning, there is nothing more needful than to  
 cloath the argument in another dress; take it then  
 in this manner: since men might, for the sin of  
*Adam*, be justly deprived of eternal life, to which  
 they had no title by nature, and become liable to  
 death; upon their progenitor’s becoming mor-  
 tal, which could not possibly be prevented without  
 a miracle, and such a miracle as neither justice nor  
 mercy made necessary, why may they not be saved  
 through the blood of CHRIST, though they con-  
 demn his laws, and do none of those things which  
 GOD requires in order to salvation? In this light,  
 which is evidently the true light, the ridicule is  
 at first sight apparent, and the false consequence  
 becomes obvious, which before lay concealed un-  
 der art and fallacy. Having thus cleared the way,  
 I am now at liberty to answer our author’s queries.  
 And first, I say, that wicked men shall be damned  
 (or which is the same, if the merits of CHRIST  
 will not be applied to men without their own en-  
 dea-

deavours) not because CHRIST has not as much power to save them, as *Adam* had to damn them; for CHRIST is Almighty, and therefore can do every thing, which is an object of power, *i. e.* which does not imply a contradiction. But the reasons probably are as follow: First, because it is not reasonable that these men should be happy who have so grossly abused the divine goodness, as to despise that redemption which he purchased with his blood. 2dly, Because the divine justice must necessarily make a remarkable difference between the righteous and the wicked, which it would be impossible to do without actually punishing the wicked, and rewarding the righteous: for though it may be said, that this may be well enough provided for, by rewarding the one more than the other; yet, this will not be a sufficient difference, because happiness is not to be measured by the quantity of good things conferred, but by the peace and satisfaction which results from them. Thus we may see a poor countryman frequently as happy, nay, more so, in the produce of his little farm, than a *Dives* who is cloathed with purple and fine linen and fareth sumptuously every day. His wants are few, and his desires are confined within narrow bounds, and when those wants are supplied, and those desires gratified, his happiness is compleat; and without new appetites, could receive no increase by the addition of greater treasure. So without doubt, it will be in the other world.—Different degrees of glory, will make different people equally happy; because, these



these different people will have different natures and capacities.—A different degree of happiness therefore will not be a sufficient distinction between the righteous and the wicked. Some more remarkable difference must be made by a righteous governor of the world; and that only can be, by punishing the guilty.—But, 3dly, another reason why men must act for themselves in order to be justified is, because God has told us so in his word, and therefore it must be true. This is so plain from the places already quoted, *p.* 23 and 29. that it is needless to multiply texts to prove it further, and thither I beg leave to refer you.

Our author's next question is this, " Now by  
 " the reconciliation which JESUS CHRIST has  
 " wrought between man and his father, were  
 " they not reinstated in the condition they were  
 " in before the fall of *Adam*?" By which question he insinuates, that the posterity of *Adam* are now in the same state as if he had not sinned. And I answer to it, by denying the fact, and by desiring our author to prove his allegation.—I own indeed, that men, by a lawful baptism, are restored to the favour of God, as much as if *Adam* had not sinned; because the guilt of their corruption (if it may properly be termed guilt) is washed away in that sacred laver of regeneration. I own too, that whosoever is born of water and the spirit, has a new title to the kingdom of Heaven; and that if such die before the commission of actual sin, they are as certainly saved as if *Adam* had not fallen. But still there are many remarkable

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able

able differences between our present state, and what our condition would have been, in case our first parent had not fallen. And first, death, pain and sickness were the consequences of his sin. To these we are every day, and every hour, exposed ; which, but for that, we had never known : for man, without sin, was without misery. Pain, sickness and death are punishments, and punishments could not have been inflicted, but in consequence of an offence. But, 2dly, The depravity of our nature is another sad proof, how much our present differs from our original condition. Man was created innocent ; free from sin, and with passions under the restraint of reason, had he exercised that reason : but we feel a propensity to evil, and a backwardness to good ; and without the assistance of divine grace, could never conquer and subdue our irregular appetites. And in the last place, we are still in a state of trial, and but candidates at best for Heaven, which we may notwithstanding lose : whereas, if *Adam* had not sinned, we had been fixed, as the Angels now are, in an immutable state of virtue ; and his obedience would have conferred an actual title to eternal life.

Our immortality would have then commenced with our birth, and would have been perfected by our translation into Heaven without dying. “ The  
 “ sin of *Adam* then, and its consequences, are not  
 “ to be looked upon as if they had never hap-  
 “ pened,” as the pamphlet alleges ; because we  
 have now seen that our condition is greatly alter-  
 ed

ed by that sin ; altered indeed, much for the worse ; but we are to look upon our author's conclusion as false, because it is founded upon false premises. In p. 13. he quotes the following verses : “ *And not only so, but we also joy in GOD through our LORD JESUS CHRIST, by whom we have now received the atonement ; wherefore as by one man, sin entered into the world, and death by sin ; and so death passed upon all men, ἐφ’ ᾧ πάντες ἡμάρτων for that all have sinned (or as a learned author renders the words) as far as which all have sinned, for, until the law was, death was in the world, but sin is not imputed where there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.*” Rom. v. 10. 14.

And then says, “ By these words of St. Paul, we see first, that our advantages are greater since the redemption, than they were before the sin of *Adam*.” And as far as I understand our author, I have no objection to his doctrine : but when he subjoins, “ We see, 2dly, That the application of the redemption is in the same manner, as is the application of the sin of *Adam* ;” I must beg leave to tell him, that I have already proved the contrary, of this latter. That there is a resemblance between the effects of CHRIST’s redemption, and the consequences of *Adam*’s sin, I readily grant ; because the Apostle has elsewhere clearly proved that resemblance ; nay, I grant that, *as in Adam all die,*



so in CHRIST shall all be made alive. And if this concession will satisfy our Author, we are agreed.

Let us see then how these propositions — *In Adam all die, and in CHRIST all shall be made alive*, are to be understood.—And first, what the meaning of the proposition in *Adam* all die is : now from thence we are not to infer, that every individual of human nature shall actually undergo a separation of soul and body ; for *Enoch* and *Elias* are examples already to the contrary, and that whole generation of people who shall be alive at the coming of our BLESSED SAVIOUR, consisting probably of many thousand millions, will be still farther exceptions to the general rule. See 1 Cor. xv. 51. and 1 Theff. iv. 17. The same doctrine we learn from our *Creed* ; for therein we declare our belief, that CHRIST shall come to judge the *quick* as well as the *dead*.

Since then it is certain, that all men do not actually die in *Adam*, as the words at first sight seem to imply, they must have another meaning, which is this—That by the sin of *Adam*, death was brought into the world, and he, and all his posterity, made liable to it ; *i. e.* became of a mortal nature.—In this sense, even *Enoch* and *Elijah* were mortal, and died in *Adam* ; and this leads us to the true meaning of the other proposition—*In CHRIST all shall be made alive*—*viz.*—That by CHRIST all men are made capable of immortality—by his passion he hath broken the gates of death, and given mankind a title to a resurrection to  
eternal



eternal life.—Before the sufferings of our BLESSED SAVIOUR, *Ὁυρανὸς ἡν ἀλειος* saith St. Chrysostom, Heaven was impervious; but by his triumphant entry there, he hath opened its doors to all believers. The sum of what I have said on this head, is this; all men became liable to death by Adam's sin, but all men do not actually die; so all men are made capable of immortal life, i. e. of salvation thro' the merits of CHRIST's death; but all men shall not actually be saved—which is a conclusion directly contrary to our authors.—In p. 14. the following verses are quoted from the 15th inclusively.

“ *But not as the offence, so also is the free gift;*  
 “ *for if through the offence of one, many be dead,*  
 “ *much more the grace of GOD, and the gift by*  
 “ *grace which is by one man JESUS CHRIST,*  
 “ *has abounded unto many. And not as it was by*  
 “ *one that sinned, so as the gift for the judgment*  
 “ *was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is*  
 “ *of many offences unto justification; for if by one*  
 “ *man's offence, death reigned by one; much more*  
 “ *they who receive abundance of grace; and of the*  
 “ *gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one,*  
 “ *JESUS CHRIST: therefore, as by the sin of one,*  
 “ *judgment came upon all to condemnation; so by*  
 “ *the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon*  
 “ *men to justification of life: for as by one man's*  
 “ *disobedience, many were made sinners; so by the*  
 “ *obedience of one, shall many be made righteous.*”

And then the author subjoins the following questions: “ What could we wish for plainer than  
 “ these words of St. Paul? If the Apostle were

“ now

“ now upon earth, and would vindicate the con-  
 “ clusion I undertake to prove, could he  
 “ make use of terms more full than these I  
 “ have here transcribed from his epistle ?”  
 What reason our author has to triumph in this  
 place, Sir, you will soon learn by looking into  
 Dr. *Wells* and Dr. *Whitby*’s commentary upon it,  
 which I have already mentioned. Mean time,  
 give me leave to observe, that there is not one  
 word of all the Apostle has said that can prove  
 our author’s conclusion, unless we pervert his  
 meaning, and make him speak contradictions  
 when a fair and candid account may be given of  
 it, and such as is easily reconcilable to his known  
 and avowed doctrine.—I have already shewn, from  
 plain and obvious passages, what St. *Paul*’s senti-  
 ments are, with regard to the future state both  
 of the righteous and the wicked. I have shewn,  
 from this very same epistle, that he believes mi-  
 sery and torment will be the portion of the one,  
 as certainly as glory and honour will be confered  
 upon the other : and there is nothing in the  
 verses now quoted, that in the least contradicts  
 that opinion : for the Apostle’s design here is  
 only to magnify the Grace of God to mankind,  
 in that he hath not only absolved us from the pu-  
 nishment to which we were subjected by the sin  
 of *Adam* ; but hath further been mercifully  
 pleased to grant us a pardon of all our own ac-  
 tual transgressions, thro’ the merits and media-  
 tion of our SAVIOUR. This is the purport of  
 the 15, 16, and 17th verses : and then at the  
 18th

18th he adds, that as, thro' the one offence of our first parent, all men were condemned to mortality, *i. e.* became liable to death; so, thro' the righteousness of One (CHRIST) the goodness of God hath so extended itself likewise to all men, as to make them capable of justification to life. For (continues the Apostle) *as by one man's disobedience, Adam's, the many (i. e. all mankind) were made or constituted sinners; so, by the obedience of one (the SON of GOD) ὡς πολλοί, the many (i. e. all mankind) shall be made or constituted righteous.*—I have already explain'd the meaning of the phrase—made sinners, but however, to corroborate what I have there said, and to make the sense of this verse, which has been so much abused by our author and others, the more intelligible, give me leave to observe, that, as the Apostle who wrote this epistle was by birth a *Hebrew*, so in this and his other writings he frequently uses the *Hebrew* idiom. We have no less than two instances of it in the verse before us—made sinners—one;—made righteous—the other. To be made a sinner, in the *Hebrew* dialect, is the same thing as to be punished, or condemned by a judicial sentence: and to be made righteous is synonymous with--being absolved from punishment.—A thousand examples of this might be brought from the Old Testament, but I shall satisfy myself with one: it is one however, that explains both the phrases—You will find it, Sir, in the book of *Proverbs*, chap. 17, ver. 15.—He that justifieth [in the *Hebrew*

*brew*, he that absolveth from punishment] the wicked, and he that condemneth [*Heb.* he that maketh a sinner] the just; both the two are an abomination to the LORD.—Whoever desires more satisfaction, may find numberless instances of the like kind, by consulting any *Hebrew* concordance. But it is so well known to every body, who is barely initiated into the rudiments of the sacred language, that the Word **יָשׁוּׁ**, which in *Kal* signifies to be wicked, or act wickedly, in the *Hiphil* signifies to make wicked, or to treat as wicked; *i. e.* to condemn: and, on the other hand, ~~this~~ **קִיַּׁם**, which in *Kal* signifies to be justified, in *Hiphil*, signifies to pronounce just or to absolve; that further instances are needless. And indeed if it had not been extremely obvious, I, who have but very slender attainments in the *Hebrew*, would not have mentioned it.—From what has been said then, Sir, it appears, that the phrases made sinners, and made righteous, in the 19th verse, answer to the words condemnation and justification in the 18th: and this being granted, the sense of the verse becomes obvious.—Indeed, it is nothing else but a repetition of the same truths in a different form of expression, and therefore it is needless to repeat them.—It is plain then, that this difficult passage, when thoroughly weighed and examined, is far enough from answering our author's purpose. It only tells us (what the other Scriptures every where teach) that we are loosed from the bands of death in virtue of our BLESSED SAVIOUR'S passion



passion and resurrection, and that we are now capable of obtaining eternal life ; but it speaks not one word of mens being saved without their own endeavours ; much less, when they impiously despise the authority of GOD, and strive with might and main to defeat his gracious purposes towards them, which is our author's inference from it in p. 20th. To strengthen his conclusion from the last-mentioned verses, and to obviate, as he imagined, the objections of an adversary, he refers us to the 20th and 21st verses of the same chapter. “ *Moreover, the law entered that the offence might abound ; but where sin abounded, Grace did much more abound : that as sin bath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign thro' righteousness unto eternal life, through JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD.* ”—But how these either confirm his doctrine or confute mine, I am at a loss to know ; nay, I am greatly mistaken if the last of them does not clearly prove the catholic doctrine which I endeavour to defend. For, after the Apostle has magnified the goodness of GOD in forgiving those many offences under the law, which were committed after the similitude of *Adam's* transgression ; that is, which were committed against a positive law threatning death to the offender, which is the design of the 20th verse. He then adds, ver. 21, that as sin reigned (*i. e.* extended itself) over all unto death, even so might grace reign (or extend itself) over all, *thro' righteousness*, unto eternal life by JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD. Where you may observe, Sir, that the grace of

GOD extends itself over all unto eternal life only thro' righteousness, viz. as the condition of obtaining it, which is the thing I have all along asserted.—The author says, p. 15. that the word grace, in the 20th verse, signifies the fact of redemption, but it does not. By grace is there meant the goodness of GOD in sending a redeemer, and in pardoning the sins of the *Jews*, to which a capital punishment belonged, for the sake of that redeemer. At the bottom of the same page, he quotes 1 Cor. xv. 22. "*As in Adam all die, so in CHRIST shall all be made alive*"; and then adds this remark—not one has "escaped death; not one shall be deprived of life in glory."—That not one has escaped death is absolutely false, (see p. 37. 38. of this letter) and therefore that not one shall be deprived of life in glory, must be a false conclusion. In p. 16. three other texts of Scripture are reduced, one from St. *Luke*, a second from St. *Matthew*, and a third from St. *John's* gospel.—The purport of the 1st and 3d, is, that CHRIST came not to destroy, but to save mankind; which has been already spoke to in this letter.—The passage from St. *Matthew's* gospel is delivered in these words: "*Even so it is not the will of your FATHER who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.*"—Which is no more than a general declaration concerning the design of our BLESSED SAVIOUR's coming into the world, and of his wishes and inclinations that  
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the professors of his gospel should walk according to it, and be saved. But they prove nothing of the unconditional and absolute salvation of every individual, unjust as well as just ; and, unless they prove this, they can never be made to serve our author's cause. And as for that passage already quoted of St. Paul—*where sin abounded, grace did much more abound*, it might be used with great propriety, notwithstanding the damnation of the wicked part of mankind ; because it has respect only to the *Jews*, and was intended, as I before observed, to extol the goodness of God in forgiving the many offences they committed, which, after the promulgation of the law, were of the same nature with that of *Adam*.—

But it is now time to consider his 4th article. In this our author pretends to argue from principles of reason ; and he begins in this manner :  
 “ If God does not save all men without excep-  
 “ tion, that cannot proceed but from these rea-  
 “ sons ; that he will not, or that he cannot ;  
 “ or that men have render'd themselves unwor-  
 “ thy of it. This analysis appears to be com-  
 “ plete, and it seems not possible to add one  
 “ member to it.” p. 17. Whether our author's analysis is complete or not, I shall not take time at present to dispute : it is sufficient for me, if I can prove it to be fallacious, ambiguous, and sophistical ; and this, I think, may be done, in few words. In the first place then, permit me to observe that the phrase, *Will of God*, may be

understood in two different senses ; either as a bare desire, expressive only of the wishes and inclinations of the mind ; or, 2dly, as a fixed resolution or determination of the mind, after the last judgment of the understanding. To deny that GOD wills the salvation of all men, in the first sense of the expression, is indeed not only to contradict the place our author has here quoted, (which, by the by, might be more justly rendered—*Who wills all men to be saved*, not who will have, &c.) but many other passages of Holy Writ. But, to infer from hence, that GOD has formed a settled resolution, that he has absolutely resolved to save *all men* without distinction, bad as well as good, is one of the wildest conjectures and falsest conclusions that can be drawn, and is directly repugnant to the general tenor, I had almost said, to every page of the Sacred Records. The like reasoning we may use concerning that other expression of our author—That GOD *cannot save all men*. To deny that ALMIGHTY GOD has a physical power to save all men, is indeed to deny his omnipotence, and, at once, to undeify him. I allow it : but still I must contend, that to say GOD cannot save all men, in a moral sense, (*i. e.* consistently with his sacred attributes) is sound doctrine, and exactly the Apostle's language ; when he says—GOD, who *cannot lie*. For, it is as inconsistent with the justice and holiness of the divine nature to admit into Heaven the impure and flagitious, who have cast his laws behind their backs ; and made themselves fit companions for  
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the devil and his angels, as it is repugnant to the veracity of God to tell a falsehood. I have offered the reason of this before, but I beg leave again to repeat it, and it is this: that if the wicked were to be admitted into Heaven, and to become completely happy; nay, to enjoy greater happiness than if *Adam* had not sinned, which is our author's supposition, it would be absolutely impossible to make a sufficient difference between the just and unjust; which (with reverence I speak it) God must necessarily do.—I now proceed to consider the last part of our author's argument, p. 18. it is in these words: "When God considers men in reference to salvation, either he considers them in *Adam*, or themselves, or in *JESUS CHRIST*." Well, let us suppose with our author, that he considers them in *JESUS CHRIST*: what follows from that? Why in that case (says he) there is not one of them who is not worthy of salvation. If we ask the reason, he tells us, because *CHRIST* has satisfied his father for them. But give me leave to ask our author one question more. Has *JESUS CHRIST* satisfied his Father, for all men without any thing requisite on their part, to give them a right to that satisfaction? This is what our author ought to prove; otherwise, all he has said, or can say, is nothing to the purpose. But this he has not yet proved, and I dare venture to say, never will prove, until he has made a new bible. It is therefore mere jargon in this place, to talk of the power and efficacy of *CHRIST*'s satisfaction, because we are agreed it was sufficient

cient to redeem ten thousand worlds. It is as little to the purpose, to tell us in general terms, that CHRIST has satisfied for all men ; for neither about that have we any difference. But the hinge of the dispute turns upon this—whether faith and obedience are, or are not necessary to give any one a title to CHRIST's merits. The former I have clearly shewn to be the case from plain and obvious texts of Scripture. The latter our author takes for granted to be true, contrary to the whole tenour of Holy Writ, and all along fallaciously argues upon that supposition : and which of us has acted the fairest part, and has the best title to be believed, do you, Sir, determine : he, who barely asserts things, or at best, brings but the shadow of proofs, and these taken from some obscure passages, which he interprets in such a manner, as to contradict the known sentiments of the inspired penmen when they speak more intelligibly ; or I, who not only have asserted, but have demonstrated plainly my assertions, by the most authentic, and the clearest proofs. In *p.* 19. our author goes on in the same unpardonable manner, to misapply and pervert other passages of Holy Scripture :—for neither of the parables which he there quotes, has the least affinity to what he has brought them for ; neither of them mention the grace of redemption, neither of them have the least connection with it. By the parable of the net, our BLESSED SAVIOUR very justly and clearly represents the state of the church, while it continues in this world : for, as the net gathers of all kind of fish,

fish, clean and unclean; so the church contains, and always will have in it, some good, some bad members. And by the parable of the leaven was typically foretold the great increase of the gospel, from a small beginning. This is the plain scope of both these parables, as any intelligent reader, who consults the context, will quickly see; and, if they have the least connection either with the grace of redemption or super-abundance, I am so unhappy as not to perceive it.

At the bottom of the same page 19. our author quotes the 2d ch. of St. *Paul's* epistle to the *Ephesians*, from the 5th to the 10th verse inclusive; and after a great many useless words upon the subject, he at last forms this syllogism.

“ If the convivification of *Peter* in *JESUS CHRIST* always subsists, *Peter* must be saved.

“ The first proposition (says our author) is certain, since there can be no reason to damn a person made alive in *JESUS CHRIST*, and living in *JESUS CHRIST*.”

Now, I allow, that if the merits of *CHRIST's* death and resurrection, have been actually applied to any man, while his title to those merits continue; or, in other words, while he continues obedient to the laws of *GOD*, he cannot possibly be damned. And if our author means no more than this by his hard word (convivification) I allow too the truth of his first proposition.—Let us now consider the 2d. To prove it, he brings another syllogism.

“ That

“ That which is an absolute gift of God, and  
 “ unconditional, always subsists.

“ But the convivification of *Peter* is an absolute and unconditional gift of God.

“ Therefore the convivification of *Peter* always subsists.”

To the first of these Propositions I have no objection, providing he means by absolute and unconditional gift, a gift that cannot be forfeited.

But the *minor*, or 2d, seems not so certain; however, let us see how our author supports it.

“ Why, says he, the 2d proposition is taken from

“ St. *Paul*, who says positively, that the being

“ made alive in JESUS CHRIST is the gift of

“ GOD, and the effect of his good pleasure;

“ therefore the convivification of *Peter* being an

“ absolute gift of GOD, *Peter* must be saved.” A

most notable conclusion surely! hear the argument

again: St. *Paul* says, the convivification of *Peter*

is the gift of GOD; therefore it is an absolute and

unconditionable gift, and cannot be forfeited. If

this be a just conclusion, I dare presume to say,

there never was a false one: for my own part, I

should think it much more natural to infer the

direct contrary; that since the convivification of

*Peter* was the free gift of GOD, therefore it was

not an absolute and unconditional gift, but might

be resum'd at pleasure in case of its being slighted

or abused: and indeed, unless all GOD's gifts are

unconditional; unless it be impossible for GOD to

bestow a gift, and take it away again, this must

necessarily be the case. And if the Almighty is so

limited,



limited, I must beg leave to say, his power in this respect is more confined than that of the meanest of the sons of men; which it is blasphemy and nonsense to assert.

Mean time, if this be true, let me ask our author how it is possible to account for the fall of man, since it is certain, GOD at first gave him the gift of innocence; and if all God's gifts are unconditional, nothing man could do, could forfeit it. Let me ask too, what the Apostle means by that precept,—*quench not the spirit*? It seems to me to imply, that men may lose the spirit of GOD, or extinguish the divine flame which he kindled in their hearts: but if all God's gifts are unconditional, this also is impossible; or if the doctrine is not true, if GOD is not limited in his gifts, but may bestow them upon what conditions he pleases, and resume them when those conditions are not fulfilled, which is certainly the case, then I desire to know how it follows, that, because St. *Paul* says the convivification of *Peter* is the gift of GOD, therefore that gift must be unconditional and unforfeitable? Our author, if I mistake not, is involved in a small dilemma here, and he may chuse which side of it he pleases.—I fancy, by this time, Sir, you have enough of the gentleman's syllogisms; but, if not, you have another proof of his skill in Logic from the 5th article; which I now proceed to consider.—

*Art. 5.* I shall sum up the argument, in its full strength, as briefly as I can. It is one of that

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kind

kind which is called apogogical, or *ducens ad absurdum*, and may be thus formed.—

If GOD does not pardon all men, then GOD's mercy is not infinite ; because we may suppose a greater mercy, even such as would pardon *all men* :

But GOD does not pardon all men according to the *Christian* scheme, as adopted by the generality of *Christians* ;

Therefore, according to the *Christian* scheme so adopted, GOD's mercy is not infinite.

This is the argument ; and were it justly formed, a most powerful one it would indeed be : for, could it be proved, that the *Christian* system denied the mercy of GOD to be infinite, it would certainly follow, that this part of *Christianity* must be false : but, thanks to GOD, this is not true ; for the consequence of the major is manifestly false. It does not follow, that, because GOD will not pardon *all men*, therefore GOD's mercy is not infinite ; or, if it does, it may be easily proved, from numberless instances, that not one of the divine attributes is infinite ; and, consequently, that there is no GOD. And this, I humbly apprehend, proves a little too much ; rather more than our author would have proved, and, consequently, proves nothing.—To give one example out of many. If GOD has not done all the good that was possible to all his creatures, then GOD's goodness is not infinite ; because a greater goodness may be supposed, even such as would do the greatest possible good to all :—

But

But GOD has not done all the possible good to his creatures, for he might have made men angels; brutes, men; and, in short, he might have made all created beings equally great and glorious;

Therefore GOD's goodness is not infinite.—

This is a most charming way of reasoning surely, Sir, and a very fine system of religion we are like to draw from it.—But not to waste your time with such Stuff, permit me only to observe, that our author's own scheme is liable to the same objection. I shall prove it by the following syllogism, which I have learned from himself.—

If any system supposes that GOD does not pardon all criminals, then this system supposes that the mercy of GOD is not infinite; because a mercy may be supposed so great as to pardon all:—

But our author's system supposes, that the mercy of GOD does not pardon all criminals, because it expressly excludes Antichrist from salvation;

Therefore, our author's system supposes, that the mercy of GOD is not infinite.—If I am not mistaken, this argument, *ad hominem*, is pretty close, and I leave him to answer it at his leisure. All I have farther to say on this head, is this, that when he thinks proper to remove this objection from his own scheme of principles, I shall then undertake to clear the *Christian* system of it likewise.—After this, he adds—“Some, perhaps, will believe to elude the strength of this argument,

“ by retorting with reference to divine justice, and  
 “ by saying, that God is infinitely just, and that  
 “ his infinite justice can pardon nothing.” And  
 then, in the remaining part of this and the two  
 subsequent pages, he endeavours to answer this  
 objection, and to reconcile (what he well knew  
 never were at variance) the divine justice with the  
 divine mercy.—As for the objection indeed, it  
 is evidently absurd; it is just such an objection as  
 his last syllogism was an argument; and he cer-  
 tainly introduced it for no other reason, but in  
 order to confute it, and so deceive the unwary  
 reader into the belief of his favourite doctrine.

In p. 23d. he says, “ That there is not one  
 “ single sin of mankind, for which JESUS CHRIST  
 “ has not suffered, and which has not been pu-  
 “ nished in him.”—And from thence would  
 have us to conclude, that now there can be no  
 future punishment. But sure he, who argues in  
 this manner, must either be shamefully ignorant  
 of *Christianity*, or must wilfully pervert it’s mean-  
 ing: for how ridiculous, how absurd, how im-  
 pious is it to imagine, that the SON of GOD should  
 bleed upon the cross for his own creatures, only  
 to give them *an opportunity of affronting him*  
*with impunity?* and that he might purchase a  
*licence for them to revel in wickedness, which his*  
*soul abhors, and for the sake of which he died?*  
 Yet, this is our author’s reasoning! *Monstrum!*  
*horrendum! ingens nefas!* O my soul come not thou  
 into his secret; unto the assembly of such, mine ho-  
 nour, be not thou united.—To say more on this  
 head,



head, Sir, I think is quite unnecessary. — Give me leave, however, to explain upon what account our BLESSED SAVIOUR suffered ; or rather, what he design'd his sufferings should procure for us. Now, *he was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities* ; not to cancel the punishment due to sin, without repentance, as a debt is cancelled by the payment, and far less to purchase leave for us to riot in vice, and to make virtue needless ; but to render our obedience available to salvation, which, without his sacrifice, it would not have been ; to add strength and efficacy to our imperfect services, and to procure acceptance for them. CHRIST's sufferings are the cause, our own faith and virtue the *sine qua non* of our salvation. In short, GOD has reconciled the world to him himself thro' CHRIST, that the world might be reconciled to GOD. — But this has been sufficiently explained already, and there is nothing else in the chapter that requires an answer. I hasten therefore to the

Sixth article, which is, perhaps, the most extraordinary of all. It begins with an account of Antichrist. “ Antichrist, says our author, “ that man of sin, that son of perdition, who “ exalteth himself above all that is called God “ — That man to whom it is given to make “ war with the Saints, and to overcome them ; “ that man who receiv'd power over all kindreds, “ and tongues, and nations, and who was worshiped by the earth, and all that dwell therein, “ is no other, and can be no other, than the old “ man

“ man corrupted in *Adam*; and, considered in a  
 “ state of abstraction, that separateth him from  
 “ the redemption of CHRIST JESUS,” p. 27.  
 Again, he says, “ This old man is he who has  
 “ the spirit of the world, for whom JESUS  
 “ CHRIST did not pray ;—whom St. *Paul* so of-  
 “ ten exhorts us to put off, and to alienate our-  
 “ selves from his deeds. It is the old man, who  
 “ is the real devil, that goes about to destroy us,”  
 p. 28.—And again,——“ It is Antichrist that  
 “ shall be eternally condemned for all the sins  
 “ of men. It is he who, with death and hell,  
 “ shall be thrown into the lake of fire,” p. 29.—  
 After so long a description, one might expect to  
 know who this Antichrist is; and yet, for my  
 part, I declare I have learned little or nothing of  
 him. I can see that the words Antichrist, Old  
 Man, and Man of Sin, are synonymous terms with  
 our author ; but, whether they signify the corrup-  
 tion of our nature, or if they stand for a real person  
 [the devil for example] or what particular idea he  
 has annexed to them, or whether he has any  
 idea at all annexed to them, I know not.  
 Sometimes one would think, that, by Antichrist,  
 he meant to denote the corruption of our nature,  
 and, at other times, that he gave the devil that  
 designation ; but, in whichever of these senses  
 he uses the word, plain it is, that his accounts of  
 Antichrist are opposite and irreconcilable. For,  
 1st, if by Antichrist he means the devil, I desire  
 to know how the Apostle could desire the Chri-  
 stian *Ephesians*, to whom he wrote, to put off  
 the Old Man? Did he really believe, that the devil  
 still

still possessed his converts? Sure, if after receiving the doctrine of CHRIST, and being baptized in his name, the devil still held dominion over them, they might, with reason say, *Our faith is vain.* But this is absurd. It is much more natural to suppose, that the Apostle exhorts them to subdue their irregular passions, (some of which remain at least for a very long time unconquer'd even in the best of men) and to lay aside those sins, which in their *gentile* state, they had made habitual to them. In which sense I have always understood the word. But neither will this sense be reconcilable with our author's notions: for, if by Antichrist he means our sinful passions, then I beg to be informed how the Old Man, or Antichrist, is to be eternally condemned for the sins of men? Can sin be damned without the sinner? *May theft, perjury, and murder, be sent to Hell; and the thief, perjured man, and murthurer, go free?* If this is true, it must be own'd, the matter is *very wonderful*: and if our author has the secret of separating the sin from the sinner, even while he continues wicked, and of sending the one to the bottomless pit, while the other is translated into *Abraham's bosom*, I confess he has more legerdemain than I thought he was master of.—And yet this is not the only art the learned gentleman pretends to.—Believe him, and he can save and damn the same person, which is something still more amazing. You have his account of the matter, p. 29. in these terms—  
 “ Every man therefore is to be considered in two differ-

“ different lights. He is the old man as far as  
 “ sin works in him, and as the offspring of  
 “ *Adam* born of flesh and blood ; and, in that  
 “ respect, he may be called Antichrist : but he  
 “ is likewise the new man, inasmuch as he is re-  
 “ deemed by JESUS CHRIST, adopted by GOD,  
 “ and destined to eternal life : the earthy man,  
 “ in respect to *Adam*, subject to death and the  
 “ other penalties of sin : the heavenly man, in  
 “ respect to JESUS CHRIST, who has set him at  
 “ liberty, and freed him after his death from  
 “ the old *Adam*, and all the consequences of  
 “ sin.”——Thus you see, Sir, that, according to  
 him, every man is Antichrist in respect to  
*Adam* ; and Antichrist he has plainly told us, is  
 to be damned, and thrown to death and hell  
 into the lake of fire : but, with respect to CHRIST,  
 every one is the new man ; and he assures, that  
 the new man is destined to life eternal ; that is,  
 in short, every man shall be saved, and every man  
 shall be damned too ! *risum teneatis amici ?* But  
 not to tire your patience, I now proceed to the  
 7th article.

*Art. 7.* And, upon this chapter, I have very  
 little or rather nothing to remark, having already  
 touched, in the former part of this letter,  
 what is to be found exceptionable in it, and thi-  
 ther I beg leave to refer you, Sir, for an An-  
 swer.——

*Art. 8.* In this article some other passages  
 of Holy Scripture come under consideration,  
 all which our author, in his usual manner,  
 hath



hath perverted and misapplied. The first of them, in this article, is that of St. *Matth. i. 21.*—*He shall save his people from their sins.* By the phrase, *his people*, our author will have all the world to be meant; but sure, Sir, you will perceive (and indeed the whole tenour of Scripture proves) that it must be restrained to good men. It is true all men are the people of God in one sense; that is, as they are his creatures; and, it is likewise true, that sometimes all the members of the Church, whether good or bad, are called the people of God, particularly, in the Old Testament. It is certain too, that God is no respecter of persons now, that he excludes none from his favours upon account of their name or country: *Jews and Gentiles* are equally welcome to him under the gospel dispensation, if they *fulfill his commandments, and hearken to the voice of his word.* But, as I have before proved, *that, without holiness, no man shall see the LORD*, so it is plain, that in the strict and proper evangelical sense of the phrase, none are the people of God, but such as believe and obey the Gospel. This might be made appear from several passages in the New Testament, were it needful to collate them; but, as your own memory, Sir, will suggest sufficient proofs of it, I believe you will easily excuse me the trouble. I shall, however, mention one text, and I hope it will be deemed enough on this occasion. You will find it in St. *Paul's* second epistle to *Timothy*, ii. 19. *Nevertheless the foundation of the LORD standeth sure, having this*  
I jeal—

*seal—the LORD knoweth them that are his, &c.—*  
 By *them that are his*, I presume, the Apostle means the same as the Evangelist does, *by his people*, in the text under consideration.—They are plainly phrases of the same import. And, by the LORD's *knowing* them that are his, I think it is generally agreed, is meant, that he loves and approves of such, and will defend and maintain their cause. Now, we know that *not the hearers of the Word, but the doers only, shall be justified before God*: we know that God hateth all the workers of iniquity; and therefore, when the Apostle tells us, that God loves and approves of them that are his, (*i. e.* loves and approves of his people) we must necessarily restrain the phrase his, or his people, to the virtuous and good. The next passage our author quotes is from the Prophet *Isaiab*, ch. liii. ver. 4. &c. "*Surely he hath born our sorrows—All we, like sheep, have gone astray—The LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.*"—From which we indeed learn, that our BLESSED SAVIOUR's sufferings have atoned for our sins; that satisfaction has been made to GOD for us; and that we are reconciled to God, through CHRIST, if we believe and obey the Gospel; but, if we from thence infer, that nothing is needful on our own part, we deceive ourselves, and flatly contradict the general current of holy Scripture; which I have already often said, and beg leave once more to repeat it, requires faith and obedience as necessary conditions of salvation. That God will not plant grace in our hearts by  
 an

an act of Omnipotence, nor translate us into Heaven, in spite of ourselves, we may rest assured : and, therefore, if we sit with our hands across, and do nothing in expectation of either of these events, we shall, at last, find, to our cost, that we have taken wrong measures for Salvation, and repent us of our conduct when it will be too late.—In p. 34. our author introduces his famous doctrine concerning a Grace of Redemption, and a Grace of Superabundance : but, as he has more professedly treated of that subject in his next article, I shall therefore wave the consideration of it till we proceed to that chapter. Mean time, permit me to rescue another passage out of our author's hands. It is recorded, *Rom. xi. 32.* “ *For GOD has concluded all in unbelief, that he may have mercy upon all :*” or, as it may be better translated, “ he hath shut all up in “ disobedience that, &c.”

From this place our author pretends to prove, that all men shall be saved : but whoever looks into the chapter, will soon perceive that the Apostle is here speaking only of the admission of the *Gentiles* into the church, and the rejection of the body of the *Jews* from being the people of GOD ; and not one word is said of the salvation or damnation of mankind at the last day ; and, consequently, he will perceive, that this text, like all the rest our author has adduced, proves nothing for his purpose.—I shall here give a natural paraphrase of the Apostle's words, and leave you, Sir, to determine how much they can

serve our author's turn.—*GOD has permitted both Jews and Gentiles, at different times, to follow the bent of their own inclinations, and so to disobey him, that he might manifest his undeserved bounty and goodness to both. You, Gentiles, he heretofore suffered to walk after the council of your own wills, that he might, at this time, display his mercy in calling you into his kingdom when you were grievous sinners, and, consequently, his enemies. And he has now permitted the Jews to disbelieve and disobey, that he may hereafter manifest his goodness, by bringing them back into his fold.—*

*Art. 9.* It is now time to consider the 9th article, in which he treats of his beloved distinction, betwixt the Grace of Redemption, and the Grace of Superabundance. And here he begins, by telling us, “ that the Grace of Redemption  
 “ is nothing else than the benevolence of God,  
 “ who, by our Redeemer, has exactly replaced  
 “ men in the same state they were in before the  
 “ fall of *Adam*: and that, by the Grace of Superabundance, he means a gift of God from  
 “ his free goodness accorded to *Christians*; and  
 “ which gives them room to merit a greater happiness than those shall have who are only benefited by the Grace of Redemption.” After these definitions, our author lays down four propositions concerning *Adam*, which have no immediate connection with our main dispute, and therefore I pass over them without any observation.—

At



At the bottom of p. 39. our author tells us, that, " that the Redeemer did two things in restoring mankind; first, he re-established them precisely in the same state they were in, with respect to the happiness men would have had, who had died before the fall of *Adam*; and that happiness is that which answers to what we call the Grace of Redemption, a Grace general to all men who fell in *Adam*."

Secondly, " The Redeemer gave to all, besides that Grace, the means to merit an augmentation of happiness, &c."

Now, before we proceed farther, give me leave to point out a manifest contradiction in our author's scheme,

The first of the two last quoted paragraphs plainly supposes that the happiness, adequate to the Grace of Redemption, is such as men would have enjoyed in case *Adam* had not sinned: but if we look to p. 11. we there find, that, " by the Grace of Redemption, all men are saved, and to enjoy *greater happiness* than they would have done if *Adam* had not sinned at all."—Our author may try to reconcile these propositions if he can. But, to go on. He founds his doctrine of the Grace of Redemption, and the Grace of Superabundance, upon this often-mentioned passage of St. *Paul*—*where sin abounded, Grace did much more abound*. Whether this text can support the weight laid upon it, I leave you, Sir, now to judge. For my part, I think it cannot. I have already explain'd it in the former

former part of this letter, and thither I beg leave to refer you. All I shall add here, is, that tho' the Apostle says, the Grace of God was greater than all the sins of the *Jews*, yet he does not say that God bestows two different Graces upon mankind. These things have no manner of connection with one another; far less does the one result from the other; and yet, unless this was true, the text adduced would prove nothing to our author's purpose. However, he adds, "If men had committed no other sins than that of *Adam*, the Grace of Redemption alone, would have been sufficient to merit for *them* all the same happiness." The meaning of which words certainly is, that all, who obtain the Grace of Redemption only, are to be partakers in the same degree of happiness. That this is the true sense of this place appears from an *infection* in the foregoing article, p. 35. where the same doctrine is delivered, in these words—"The Grace of Redemption constitutes *one Mansion* in Heaven." For, if all who have obtained the Grace of Redemption, shall inhabit one Mansion, it seems necessarily to follow that they shall be all equally happy. Now, here again, our author flatly contradicts himself. For he owns, p. 42. that the *Pagans*, *Libertines*, &c. were all comprized with *Adam* in the Grace of Redemption; and yet asserts, p. 43. that it shall be *better* for the *Pagans*, at the day of Judgment, than for the *Libertines*; i. e. the *Pagans* shall be *happier* than the *Libertines*.—

In

*Infection*

In the same p. 40. our author asks, “ What  
 “ our SAVIOUR himself would have us under-  
 “ stand by his saying that he came to bring men  
 “ life, and life more abundantly ? ” Now I shall  
 answer this question, by paraphrasing the words  
 alluded to. They may be found in *John* x. 10.  
 and the meaning of them seems to be this. As it  
 is the business of good teachers to make known  
 the way of life to their disciples, so I am come  
 into the world not only to reveal eternal life to  
 my followers, but actually to purchase it for them  
 by my own death, and to purchase also greater  
 degrees of happiness for them than they could  
 possibly have obtained, even tho’ they had con-  
 tinued innocent.—

To what our author has advanced, p. 40. and  
 41. concerning the infinite obligations we lie un-  
 der to our Redeemer, and the superior advan-  
 tages we shall enjoy at the last day, with respect  
 to the happiness we shall be then possess’d of, I  
 have no objection.—It seems to me extremely rea-  
 sonable, that virtuous men shall, thro’ our BLES-  
 SED SAVIOUR, be happier than if *Adam* had  
 not sinned; because they have many difficulties  
 now to encounter, that they would in this case  
 never have been acquainted with: the conse-  
 quence is, that there is more virtue in being re-  
 ligious now, than there would have been then;  
 and, it is certain, happiness and misery will be  
 exactly proportioned to the different degrees of  
 virtue and vice.—But when our author says,  
 “ that it was not *Adam*’s acceptance of the Re-  
 “ deemer

“ deemer that restored him,” if by that he means that *Adam* could have been saved without such acceptance, he speaks without book, and errs grossly. It is true, *Adam* could have done nothing of himself to atone for his transgression ; at least, he could not have claimed salvation as his right, on account of his performances ; because he could do nothing after the fall, which he was not obliged to do in duty before it, but repent ; and it is ridiculous to plead the performance of one’s duty after a breach of it, as an atonement for that breach, since that performance was always obligatory.—

No man would think himself obliged to discharge a debt of interests, tho’ his debtor should faithfully promise to give punctual payment ever after ; and no more could **ALMIGHTY GOD** be bound to forgive the first breach of his covenant, upon *Adam’s* promising, or even performing, exact obedience for the future, had such obedience been possible.—But, tho’ man could do nothing of himself towards his own Salvation ; and tho’, as our author says, “ an infinite satisfaction “ was necessary to abolish and repair an outrage “ committed against an infinite Majesty ;” yet, it remains to be proved, that *Adam’s* reliance upon the merits of his Redeemer, and obedience to the Will of **GOD**, as then revealed, was not necessary to his salvation. Our author says indeed it was not ; but it is one thing to assert, and another to prove ; and tho’ no body exceeds him in assertions,



tions; yet, in proofs, if I may be allowed to judge, he is extremely wanting.

In p. 42: he tells us, " From the moment JESUS CHRIST accepted to satisfy the divine Justice of his Father for him, *Adam* was reconciled and restored to his first state of innocence by the Grace of Redemption, &c." I have already shewn, that the Grace of Redemption, as distinguished from the Grace of Superabundance, in our author's sense, is a meer chimera, and void of all foundation. All, therefore, I need observe here, is, that tho', from the moment of the first covenant's being transacted, JESUS CHRIST was considered, *foro Divino*, as the SAVIOUR of the world; yet, it cannot from thence follow, that *Adam* was that moment necessarily restored to his primitive state of innocence, because conditions might be required on his part, in order to entitle him to a share in our SAVIOUR's merits; and if such conditions were actually required, then unless they were fulfilled, *Adam* would not have been restored to his primitive state of innocence, notwithstanding his ransom was actually paid by CHRIST; nay, which is more, an actual ransom might have been paid by our blessed LORD for *Adam*, and *Adam* may be supposed to have performed his part of the covenant, and yet not be restored to his primitive state of innocence. The reason is, because it is not necessary to salvation, that he should be so restored. It is enough if his sins were done away, and he restored to such a degree of innocence and perfection, as the new

covenant made necessary. Our author therefore is here guilty of two gross blunders; first, in asserting that *Adam* (and consequently all mankind) could have been saved without any performance on his part, as a condition of salvation; and 2dly, in supposing that all, who obtain the Grace of Redemption, are necessarily restored to their primitive state of innocence; the first of which I have frequently and at large confuted in the foregoing part of this letter, and the latter is contrary to the experience and self-consciousness of all mankind.

Our author's supposition, *p.* 43. of *Adam's* not sinning till he had 20 children, of his transgressing then without their knowledge, and of the childrens becoming culpable for a fault which he commits unknown to them (if by culpable he means morally guilty) is a rank absurdity—because, by the hypothesis, the children are before the crime disjoin'd from their parents, and become separate and distinct beings. Consequently the doctrine of original sin can have no place here; and indeed, one may with as much reason assert, that every child now may be render'd guilty by its father's sins, or if you please, must necessarily have a fever or a head-ach, whenever its parents are affected with these disorders; which, to say the least, is scarce intelligible.

I have now followed our author to the 44th page, in which he displays a great zeal for virtue, and endeavours to recommend *Christianity* upon his own principles. With what sincerity is this done,  
and

and how reconcileable his doctrine is with CHRIST's religion, or how favourable to virtue, it is your province, Sir, not mine, to determine. All I shall say is, that though, in my apprehension, most dreadful consequences flow from his system; yet, I am unwilling to charge them upon him, because he all along argues as if he did not see them.

The remainder of the pamphlet is spent in answering the different objections that may be made against our author's scheme: and how well he has acquitted himself in that particular, it is very little my business to enquire: for, since I have disproved, I hope to your satisfaction, Sir, the scheme itself, it matters not how weak the objections are that have been hitherto made against it, or with what strength of reason our author has refuted them: however, to take away all grounds of triumph in this, as well as other respects, I shall urge one objection against his system, which to me seems unanswerable; or, at least, I shall clearly shew, that our author's reply is by no means satisfactory. It is that passage concerning *Judas*—*good had it been for that man, if he had never been born,* ~~for~~ which our author has not thought proper to make a distinct objection, but has tack'd it to the sixth in course, p. 74. and his explication of the passage is, " That it had  
 " been better for *Judas* to have died in his mo-  
 " ther's womb; for he would not then have  
 " abused the Grace of Superabundance, by the  
 " heinous treason he committed, which drew on  
 K 2 " him



“ him a shameful death, and the execration of  
 “ all good men.” But how trifling, how eva-  
 sive and delusory is our author’s sense of the words?  
 for who does not see, that our BLESSED SAVIOUR’S  
 meaning is plainly this, that it had been good for  
*Judas* if he had never had a Being? The word  
*γεννηθην* in St. *Mat.* *γεννηθην* in St. *Mark*, which we  
 translate *been born*, may as properly, and indeed  
 more consistently with the context be rendered in  
 the 1st *been begotten*, and in the 2d *been made*,  
 or had a being; and if either of these translations  
 be admitted, our BLESSED SAVIOUR’S words will  
 clearly prove what the woe before denounced  
 against him forebodes, and the heinous nature of  
 the crime deserves; a future, nay an eternal pu-  
 nishment: for I will take upon me to assert, that,  
 if *Judas*’s punishment is but temporary, our  
 BLESSED SAVIOUR’S words—that *it had been bet-  
 ter for him never to have existed, or been begotten*,  
 could have been with no propriety applied to him;  
 because the good or ill of existence is to be esti-  
 mated by the pleasure and pain that attends it. If  
 one feels more pleasure than pain in his life, or  
 during his existence, such a being is better than no  
 being or non-existence; but if the pain does more  
 than ballance the pleasure, such a state is worse than  
 non-existence, and it may be justly said of a per-  
 son in that condition, that it had been good for  
*him if he had never been born*. Now if *Judas*’s  
 punishment is for a time only, an eternity of infi-  
 nite joys must succeed to it; and, as there is no  
 proportion between infinite and finite, of conse-  
 quence



quence *Judas's* pleasure will be infinitely greater than his pain, and so his condition, bad as it may now be, is to be preferred to non-existence; contrary to what our LORD and master has declared. Thus you see the supposition of the non-eternity of hell-torments makes our BLESSED SAVIOUR not only argue weakly, but even assert a false proposition; which, being blasphemy to affirm, plainly demonstrates the falsity of the supposition. And if this follows upon the supposition of the non-eternity of hell-torments, how much more will it flow from our author's doctrine, which denies all future punishment whatsoever? If *Judas* suffered nothing after death, but entered immediately into paradise, with what truth could it be said, that it had been *good for him that he had never been born*? “ Yes, saith our author, it had “ been better for him never to have been born; “ because, he would not then have abused the “ Grace of Superabundance, which drew on him “ a shameful death, and the execration of all “ good men.” But can he be really in earnest, when he puts these things in ballance with an eternity of joys, which, according to his scheme, *Judas* became immediately possessed of after death? What though he abused, and lost the Grace of Superabundance, he did not, he could not lose the Grace of Redemption if we believe our author; and had he died in his mother's womb, he could not have obtain'd the Grace of Superabundance, because he would have wanted faith and obedience, which are necessary conditions of acquiring it.—

It

It is plain therefore on this respect, *Judas* could have gain'd nothing by dying in his mother's womb, and therefore it follows, that our author's sense of our BLESSED SAVIOUR's words is without foundation. As to the shamefulnefs of his death, if such it was, and the execration of good men, they signify nothing : for who would regard the opinion of the world, if, immediately after death, the ignominy both of his death and character was cancelled in Heaven, and *Abraham's* bosom made ready to receive him ? Mean time give me leave to observe, that though our translation says *Judas* hanged himself (from which I suppose our author infers that his death was shameful) yet there is no warrant for that in the original. It says no more than this, that as he departed, or went his way, he was choaked or suffocated, ἀπελθὼν ἀπὸ γαστροῦ. But whether he suffocated himself, or if he was punished by the judicial sentence of God, we are left in the dark. Indeed, if we compare this with what *St. Peter* says of *Judas*, in the 1st of the Acts, it seems extremely probable that his death was preternatural : for the Apostle's account there, is this, that he fell headlong πρηνὴς γενόμενος, (or upon his face) and burst in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out ; (which is no contradiction to *St. Matthew*, but an enumeration of other circumstances of his death which that Apostle had omitted.) However we have no grounds from Scripture to say, that *Judas's* death was ignominious in the same manner as the cross was among the *Romans*, or the gallows is with  
us,

us (in which sense alone I suppose our author means it) though considered as the punishment of betraying our BLESSED SAVIOUR, it must be owned no death ever was or can be so shameful; because no crime ever was or can be so great, or so ignominious as that treason. From what I have here said, I hope it appears, not only that our author has not removed this objection from his system, but that it cannot possibly be removed. It were easy to go over all the other objections which our author has mentioned, and shew, that such of them, as have not been started in order that he might have the pleasure to refute them, remain still in force, and have received no real answer: but this would make this letter swell to a very great size, which I am afraid is become too large already. Thus, Sir, I have given you in these sheets my opinion of *Heaven open &c.* in compliance to your desire, which you may dispose of as you think proper. If you think them a sufficient answer to that wicked treatise, and that they may be of service to guard unwary readers against its poison, let them, in the name of GOD, be published; and, if otherwise, be pleased to condemn them to perpetual oblivion. Mean time whatever happens, I shall have the pleasure that results from the consciousness of having meant well, and having this opportunity to testify with what respect I am, SIR,

London,  
January 25th, 1752.

Your obliged and  
most obedient Servant,  
The AUTHOR.

P O S T-



## POSTSCRIPT.

**H**AVING seen *the Layman's letter to his friend in the country*, wherein a different account is given of *Heaven open &c.* than that I have deliver'd in the above letter, I beg leave to point out some of that gentleman's mistakes. He tells us, that he, at first, read that pamphlet with strong prejudices against it, because he imagined the author went about to prove—"That no one should be liable to pain or suffering but in this life only:" and then adds, "That he soon discovered his error." From which he would have us to infer, that *Heaven open &c.* admits of a temporal punishment after death. But, that this is a mistake, is evident from the whole tenour of that author's doctrine, as well as from several particular passages of the pamphlet. Thus, for instance, he asserts, p. 23d, "That every single sin of mankind has been actually punished in JESUS CHRIST;" and p. 9, "That the sufferings of CHRIST are imputed to every individual as if they had been his own." And, if this is the case, where is there room for a temporal punishment after death? If every individual has already suffered an adequate punishment for his sins, as he asserts, how can he suppose



pose they will be punished a second time ? Again, *Heaven open* &c. says, " That the Grace of " Redemption has actually replaced men in the " same state they were in before the fall of " *Adam*." But, before the fall of *Adam*, there was no punishment ; therefore, men being restored to this state, can now suffer no punishment. This, perhaps, proves more than the author meant it should, but that is none of my business—Let him see to that.—If any doubt still remains, consult p. 7. art. 2. and it will immediately vanish ; for there the author owns, that his doctrine is not the same with *Origen*'s. Now, we know, *Origen* acknowledged a temporal punishment after death, tho' he denied eternal torments. Since then, our author denies eternal torments, and yet differs from *Origen*, the difference must consist in this, that he allows of no punishments after death ; for there is no medium.—This too plainly appears to be his opinion, from p. 29. where he says, " That JESUS CHRIST frees " the New Man, after death, from the Old " *Adam*, and from *all the consequences of sin*." For we all know, by dear-bought experience, that pain and suffering are some of the chief consequences of sin : and, therefore, if we are to be freed from *all the consequences* of sin after death ; then, certainly, from pain and punishment among the rest.—A quibbler may, perhaps, object, that the author does not say, that the New Man is freed from all the consequences of sin *at*, but *after*, death ; and, therefore, he may

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admit

admit of a temporary future punishment. But, whoever considers what I have said in this postscript, and many other passages in this pamphlet, will find that these expressions, *at* and *after* death, are tantamount, in our author's judgment ; and, therefore, by the words, *after death*, he must mean, immediately after the separation of soul and body.—From hence then, it seems to me evident, that the Layman has mistaken the plan of *Heaven open*—the consequence of which is, that every thing offered in its defence, must be precarious and uncertain, as being founded upon mistake and error.—His arguments, for instance, against the eternity of hell-torments, must be wide of the mark ; because the question is not, whether hell-torments be eternal, but whether there be any future punishment at all after death ? Mean time, give me leave to observe, that the doctrine of the eternity of hell-torments has been sufficiently proved in the preceding letter. For, I have there shewn, after Dr. *Tillotson* and many others, that the very same word which our BLESSED SAVIOUR uses to denote the duration of future happiness, he likewise makes use of, in the same sentence, to express the duration of future misery : the consequence of which is, that, by the laws of criticism, the word ought to be interpreted in the same latitude, when applied to the one, as it is when applied to the other : and, as no man ever doubted of the eternity of future happiness, so no man ought to doubt, if this argument be  
just

just, of the eternity of future misery.— But, this is not all. I have clearly proved, either, that *Judas* shall be eternally miserable; or else, that the SON OF GOD, Truth itself, has asserted a false proposition. And, as no man, who owns himself a *Christian*, dare maintain the latter; he must, of consequence, admit the former. And, if infinite goodness and mercy will permit GOD to condemn *Judas*, or any one person, to everlasting torments, they will also permit him to condemn, one hundred, one thousand, one million, or any number of persons, to eternal misery, because there is no difference. For, if the crimes of any one individual may deserve an eternal punishment, and have it actually inflicted, the crimes of any number, however great, being the crimes of so many individuals, may, for the same reason, subject every individual, of that number, to the like fate.—

This, I think, is strict reasoning; and, if it be, the doctrine of the eternity of hell-torments is most certain; and what is most certain ought not to be denied or disbelieved; tho' objections could be started against it, that, perhaps, the wisdom of man cannot resolve; for this may be the case, even with the clearest and most necessary truths.—Thus, for instance, that GOD is good and merciful, is as certain as that there is a GOD; and that he, from all eternity, foresaw the fall of man; in consequence of which fall, many thousands, or millions, perhaps, will be eternally miserable, is no less indisputable.



And yet, how to reconcile the creation of these beings, whom God foresaw would be miserable, with the divine goodness, may, perhaps, puzzle the most learned divine.—Had God prevented the birth of these wretches, he had prevented eternal misery; and, to have prevented it, would, to human reasoning, seem an action worthy of his mercy. And yet he has not done it—what must we then conclude that God is not good? God forbid. Nothing would be more false, nothing more impious.—The proper conclusion is, that man is weak and ignorant, and therefore ought to admire and adore those ways of Heaven which he cannot comprehend; and ought not to disbelieve a truth, merely because he cannot solve every difficulty which may be raised against it. The sum of what I have said is, that unanswerable objections against any proposition do always prove the ignorance and weakness of human understanding, but do not always prove the falsity of that proposition; and therefore it follows, that, tho' the Layman, in his letter, had urged unanswerable objections against the eternity of hell-torments, that would not prove, that the doctrine of their eternity is false, since I have clearly demonstrated that doctrine in the foregoing letter. But, thanks to God, no objection has yet been offered by the Layman, or any other, which has not received a sufficient answer in different treatises; and, particularly, in a late *French* pamphlet, entitled, *Eternité des peines*, whither I must refer him.—Mean time, before I conclude, permit me to observe, that,

if



if with Mr. *Pope*, and our modern philosophers, we consider the moral government of GOD, as respecting the good of the creation as a whole, rather than the welfare of a particular species of beings, or the interest of individuals, it is easy to form an hypothesis, which will answer all the phænomena of hell-torments, and solve the objections against them unexceptionably.— For example : suppose that GOD designs to continue a race of beings, such as men are, throughout the ages of eternity : suppose too, that he makes known to these different worlds the misery, into which the wicked part of this world have plunged themselves by their disobedience : and, withal, assures them, that the like behaviour will have the like fate. Who does not see of what infinite service the damnation of wicked men may be, to prevent the eternal ruin of these numberless future worlds ? They are a similar race of beings, and their circumstances are similar, by the supposition ; and what motive, therefore, so powerful, to prevent their misery, as to shew them thousands, of a like kind, actually groaning under eternal torments, as the consequence of their impieties ?—This is plainly a possible supposition ; and thus to make the misery of one part, which they themselves have chosen, subservient to the preservation and happiness of the rest, is not only not improper or unjust in the Governour of the Creation, but a mark of the greatest wisdom, and a proof of the greatest goodness.

F I N I S.

If with Mr. Fox, and our modern philantropists  
 we consider the moral government of God, as  
 respecting the good of the creation as a whole,  
 rather than the welfare of a particular locality,  
 being, or the interests of individuals, it is not  
 to form an hypothesis, which will account of all the  
 phenomena of hell-torments, and of the various  
 sections against them unaccountably.  
 example: I suppose that God designs to continue  
 a race of beings, such as men are, through  
 the ages of eternity: I suppose too, that a number  
 known to this divine world, the number, I know  
 which, the whole part of the world, have  
 sinned themselves by their disobedience; and  
 which, since then, that the law of sin  
 will have the like effect. Why should not the  
 whole infinite world be the domain of wicked  
 men may be, to prevent the eternal ruin of this  
 number of beings? They are a number  
 more of beings, and their circumstances are such  
 as, by the supposition, and without any  
 force, to prevent their ruin, and  
 show them the kind, of a like kind, and  
 growing under eternal torment as the  
 presence of their injuries:—This is a  
 possible supposition; and thus to make the  
 of one part, which they themselves have  
 subjected to the probation and punishment of  
 the law, is not only not improper, or unjust in  
 the Government of the Creation, but a mark of  
 the strict wisdom, and a proof of the  
 goodness.

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